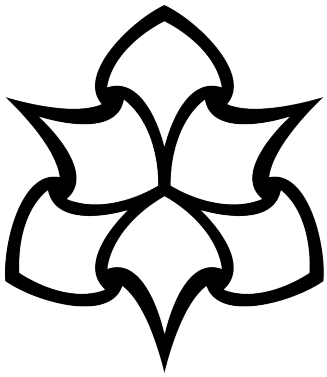

CREATING A SPACE OF ENCHANTMENT; THREAD AS A NARRATOR OF THE FEMININE.

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PHD 2016

CREATING A SPACE OF ENCHANTMENT; THREAD AS THE NARRATOR OF THE FEMININE.

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Tamsin Koumis, Emma Clery, Myna Trustram, Amanda Ravetz, Fionna Barber, Jane Webb and Barbara Rawlings.

Creating a space of enchantment: Thread as a narrator of the feminine

Abstract

This thesis is a practice---led reflection on a selection of creative artwork produced between 2003 and 2015. An analytical commentary indicates how eight publications — artwork publicly exhibited and recorded in published catalogues comprising of Odyssey series (2003); Odyssey and Odyssey-Hermes and the Lotos-Eaters, Looking Forwards to the Past (2007), Heads Series (2008-10); Rupt, Sol and Cor, Pause and Pause ll (2009), Alice Kyteler (2010), The Garden of England (2012); Flower Helix, Flower-Bed and Portrait of Henrietta Maria, Loss (2011); Homage to Guernica (2011) Paradise Lost (2010), Golden Dawn; Golden Dawn (2014) and The Dog Loukanikos and the Cat's Cradle (2015) — contribute to the knowledge of enchantment in the field of art. I have examined enchantment as a mode of artistic engagement explored under the themes of narrative, the feminine and materiality. The publications examine how enchantment operates within narrative figurative art, focusing on how it is manifested in women's artistic practice of the past century, and in my own artistic practice.

Synopsis

The first part of this study sets out factors commonly encountered by artists working within the modality of enchantment in order to frame the understanding of my published work. The second part explores the development of my work in reconciling notions of narrative, the feminine and the making process. The meeting of ideas and making can be understood through the state of enchantment and the 'in-betweenness' it offers. While my work shares ideologies of contemporary women's lived experience expressed through narrative art practice, my personal practice — most notably its continual play between seeing and not seeing — takes the study into how the artistic process works. Thread offers a particular narrative voice that can be appropriated for feminine needs of concealed meaning, but I argue that it also serves to clarify the movement between metaphor and realisation that is essential to artistic creation. The research aims to show how the transformational possibilities offered by the space of enchantment enable not only the creative process, but a recuperative 're-membering'. Enchantment enables a shift of powerlessness and power.

Contribution to knowledge

My published work examined here evidences stages of development in my encounter with the epic, the autobiographical and the contemporary female perspective. These contribute to a new understanding of enchantment that moves beyond the literary into the artistic context. This understanding suggests why the mode of enchantment is suited to an expression of the feminine and why women artists working in this modality exhibit common goals and methods.

Introduction

> [A]rt offer[s] the potential to reinforce the primordial power of dreaming, where imagining and envisioning re---establishes the connection with the non---rational, mythic domain … It can re---enchant us.
>
> David Morgan, *Re---enchantment* (2009:16)

This thesis concerns the role of enchantment in my artistic practice; a practice---based on making monumental pictorial works in the medium of thread. There is a British tradition of figural work in thread which extends from the Bayeux Tapestry to the allegorical schemes at Hardwick Hall[1], through the painterly stitched works of Mary Linwood[2] and on to Phoebe Traquair[3] and beyond – all closely linked with aspects of female identity (Figures 1, 2, 3). My work stands within this tradition, while remaining determinedly contemporary in its process and themes. This study shows how my work is situated within the histories of women who use the medium of needle and thread in works that integrate mythology and personal experience.

The study focuses on three aspects of my work: the narrative, both personal and archetypal; the feminine taking note of the contested relationship between women and thread---based work; and processes of making which are not separate from content. Using works selected from eight exhibitions to chart these pathways, evidence of their interconnection through enchantment (including disenchantment and re---enchantment) is uncovered. The use of enchantment in resolving inner conflicts and external provocations is also touched upon.

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[1] Levey, S. M. (1996)

[2] Works by Mary Linwood are in Leicester City Museum: http://www.leicester.gov.uk/your---------councilservices/lc/storyofleicester/cityheritage/peopleofleicester/marylinwood/ (accessed 10th August 2014).

[3] Phoebe Traquair is discussed in Chapter 3.I.

Figure 1
Bayeux Tapestry (detail)
1070s
7000 x 50 cm Collection:
Museum Bayeux

Figure 2
Penelope (detail)
Appliqué wall hanging
Collection: Hardwick Hall
©National Trust
Photo: John Hammondbyshire

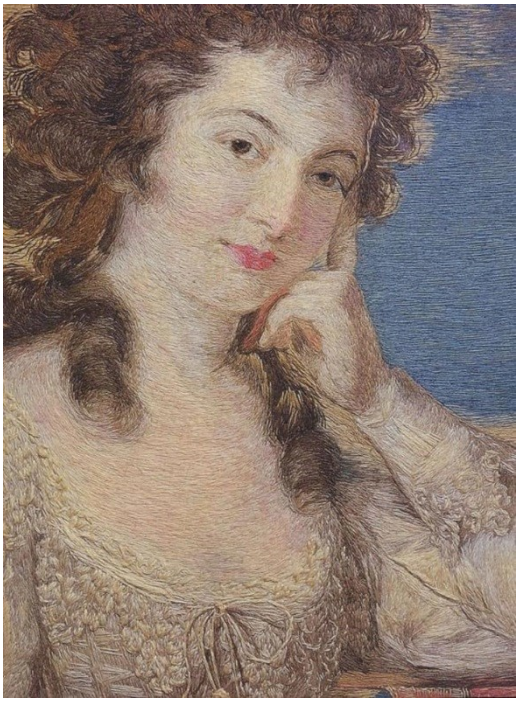

Figure 3
Mary Linwood (1755–1845)
Self Portrait After John Russell (detail)
Embroidery
Size unknown

1. Introduction to Enchantment

Enchantment is a state of mind that allows the interpenetration of actual and imaginary zones, facilitating movements into and out of alternative ways of framing time, space, imagery and their narrative interlinking. For Suzi Gablik (1991) art is enchanted, transcendent, ultimately good, described by David Morgan as a 'human way of knowing' (2003:16). While such an idealistic view might be contested, this thesis seeks to probe the relationship between artistic knowledge and enchantment although taking a different approach from the discourse set out by Alfred Gell which is interested in the enchantment of the viewer; this research concerns the use of enchantment in the process of artistic creation.[4]

The literary critic Tzvetan Todorov (1975) explored the narrative genre of the 'fantastic', a genre with significant parallels to enchantment in art. Todorov defines the fantastic as an in---between state where we can experience an event that appears beyond the laws of nature, neither as real (but unexplained) which would make it 'uncanny', nor as imaginary which would take it to the realm of the 'marvellous' (1975:25). In literature, both hero and reader can hesitate between the worlds of reality and the supernatural, 'implying an integration of the reader into the world of the characters' (Todorov, 1975:31). The in-between state can be sustained by modalisation. Todorov gives the linguistic example of: '"It is raining outside" and "Perhaps it is raining outside" which refer to the same fact; but the second also indicates the speaker's uncertainty as to the truth of the sentence he utters. By means of this device, we are 'kept in both worlds at once.' He continues, 'The narrator can go further and adopt the character's view that madness and dreaming are only a higher form of reason, whereby the hesitation shifts from one

[4] Alfred Gell's discourse on enchantment is based on the agency of objects.

concerning perception to one concerning language and meaning' (1975:38–40). We will see that these three devices also exist in enchantment: (1) entering into the world of the narrative; (2) a modality that allows uncertainty to persist; and (3) a temporary adoption of the dream as a higher reality.

Enchantment is thus not just a mood, but rather a mindfulness that allows an alternative way of experiencing the world. Often springing from an inexplicable past event, it seems to sweep you up in longing and anticipation of a meaning. It is at once physical and visual. And it is reversible: you can fall out of enchantment, or be disenchanted. Enchantment can be taken to imply magic or sorcery, which gives it perjorative qualities. The early modern concept of wonderment might be an alternative. Wonderment in its mystical construct is where the spiritual and sensory are part of a multi---dimensional whole body.[5] But to most, wonderment is a temporary enhanced state that does not convey the sustained practice of enchantment. In modern times, the surrealists, adopting Freudian ideas, valued the dream---centred vision; alternative mental states were not to be considered pathologies but legitimate modes of experience. Enchantment may be one such non---pathological modality.

1.1 The narrative

The body of published work analysed here draws upon myth or story as vehicle for imaginative action. Elizabeth and Paul Barber (1994) studied myth as a trans---generational message carrier that allows us to communicate incomprehensible personal and collective loss as part of the process of coping with large---scale disasters. For the individual, these stories allow us a means to contemplate abusive and painful experiences by moving them to an archetypal rather than a personal

[5] In medieval thought, the magic bridge connected the celestial and terrestrial worlds as united and cooperative hosts. This appears to describe a similar state of betweenness identified in enchantment and provides us with a useful metaphor.

level. Lutz Rohrich, writing on the traditional story, finds the 'paradigmatic examples of conflicts in decisive life situations' (1986:1) provided by myth to be resolution---oriented and optimistic. Fluid in time and space, they are open to continual modernisation. This study looks at personal emancipation within the storied vision; stories can signpost an equivalent reality within the dislocation of real experience where one can imagine possibilities of belonging and locatedness elsewhere. The storied setting allows us to examine the truth of who we are, the desires within us and the relationships we have, much more comfortably. Bruno Bettleheim sees the story like an anchor that allows transformational, abstract thinking with 'life divined from the inside' (2010:23). Both stories and art are a way of accessing another space, one that lies between imagination and reality – a place that is transformative and, I would argue, a space to encounter enchantment.

1.2 The feminine

By the feminine, I refer to the particular nature of the female voice expressing the condition, limits and power of womanhood as a creative force, in relation to enchantment. Women's struggle for equality affords the feminine voice a distinct modality. Melanie Miller links medium, process and subject, to the themes of 'domesticity, sexuality, femininity and women's history' in feminist practice (Miller, 2012:117). The rise of the feminist art movement in the late 1960s and 1970s utilised these themes to confront the schisms of art historical hierarchies in gender and medium in order to bring marginalised practices, such as domestic crafts and embroidery, into the mainstream (Miller, 2012:116). The invisibility of women as artists was examined by Griselda Pollock and Roszika Parker in *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (1981). They demonstrated how tacit ideologies operate within art history to devalue and misrepresent women's artistic contributions, ultimately leading to their being largely ignored. The authors similarly identified various feminist strategies emerging in the 1960s and 1970s,

notably art practices that 'validate women's domestic labour, private and taboo areas of female sexuality and the craft traditions' but which ironically also run the risk of reconfirming stereotypical associations of women with home, the body and decorative needlework (Parker and Pollock, 1981:158). Parker's *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine* (1983) delved more deeply into women's creative practice of the domestic crafts. She explored how stitch both marginalised women within the domestic realm and provided a distinct language to escape this entrapment – a language capable of conveying the condition of being female. Needlework afforded an enabling space for women, challenging the denigration of their milieu, 'used for social or political purpose' (Miller, 2012:119), for collective working and creative means.[6] This study acknowledges the importance of textiles within feminist art practice and presupposes the reciprocal relation of textiles and the feminine. It will show that this relationship can facilitate the entry into enchantment.

The feminist theory of Luce Irigaray fixes the feminine in relation to the maternal andwoman---centredratherthanthe oppositionto masculine.Exploringtheconcept of divinity she describes the female imaginary as a site for understanding the nature of maternal desire as part of embodied being; incarnation links spirit and flesh subverting the traditional binary conceptualisation. We see an example in the Visitation to the Virgin, which is the defining mystery of Christianity, forming a central focalisation of the feminine in Western art tradition. But unlike the androcentric tradition, feminine identity emerges from within and as a sensation of her body. Through touch the feminine becomes embodied in her own creative potential. Irigaray's link between the maternal body and the female as a creative

[6] Craft and activism is also a key area not included in this study; see Greer, B. (2008). Carpenter, E. (2010). Gauntlett, D. (2011)

imaginative is important to us as it manifests in large---scale figurative artwork, and in the exploration of the process of becoming, which can take place in the space of enchantment.

1.3 Material and process

Kathryn Sullivan Kruger in 'The Fabric of Myth', talks of 'the mysterious power of fabric' which reproduces symbols and beliefs while acting as a metaphor 'for the creation of something other than a cloth – a story, a plot, a world' (2008:10). Looking more closely at the process of stitching Roszika Parker presents embroidery within the very arteries of the feminine. With its heritage in women's hands, it provides the grounding medium of invention to 'create forms ... truer to our skills and experience' (Parker, 2013:211). This overtly female art practice co-exists with conservative practices allowing the subversive use of embroidery to generate meaningful and transformative counter narratives (2013:215).

Ann Macbeth, who taught embroidery from c 1911 at the Glasgow School of Art, describes the liberating capacity of needlework to permit curiosity to play freely (Macbeth and Swanson, 1913). In examining the process of stitching, the most evident characteristic is the intense attentiveness it requires. The novelist Colette was made anxious by her daughter's still concentration: 'Eyes lowered, head bent, shoulders hunched – the position signifies repression and subjugation, yet the embroiderer's silence … suggests a containment, a kind of autonomy' (Colette, cited in Parker, 2013:10). Parker makes reference to Freud's view, where this concentration induced daydreaming and a hypnoid state (Freud, cited in Parker, 2013: 12) accessed through the repetitive actions of stitching. I would argue that such states are not cut off from normal waking consciousness but relate to the process of *entering* the space of enchantment.

For the painter Paula Rego, creativity is brutal: 'I'd start making the creatures on pieces of paper … when I had them I would cut them up. The pleasure of the cutting was part of it, it was a thrilling thing to do. Bodily, sexually, thrilling' (Bradley, 1997:9). Rego's method, with its chanciness of thought and gesture, allows for appropriation, recycling and reconstruction, all attributes that the stitched work is especially suited for.

In my practice, the process of embroidery brings together two independent threads, connecting them as stitches in the machine. The production process that I have evolved works from the hidden (the reverse side of the work) to generate the seen (the public face of the work). In making, it is only possible to glimpse the result from time to time; the totality is only complete within the mind's eye. A.S. Byatt, reflecting on the medieval world view, writes: 'The surface of the earth was like a great embroidered cloth ... with an intricately woven underside of connected threads', thus emphasising the crucial connections of the invisible underside, and the relation between seen and sensed reality. The machine as the extended hand, which Michel Serres calls a capacity for doing (Serres, cited in O'Connor, 2005: 321) provides a powerful beat driving forward the process of making. The meeting of these sensed and imagined realities is a process of becoming whole. Hence, the material of textiles is indexical of the female and repair; through stitching, self---restoration is translated into a physical act.

2. Methods

This study critically analyses my work through the narrative, the feminine and the making process as modes to enter enchantment. This meeting of ideas and making can be understood throughenchantmentand the in---betweenness it offers.[7] The course of my work has developed intuitively and in response to commissions, and a significant part of my activity has been through artistic collaboration. This study is a retrospective examination of key works that describe the development of one pathway in my practice, one that can make a contribution to academic knowledge.

My practice – most notably its continual play between seeing and not seeing – takes the study into how the artistic process works. Thread offers a particular narrative voice that can be appropriated for feminine needs of concealed meaning, but I will argue that it also serves to clarify the movement between metaphor and realisation that is essential to artistic creation. Luce Irigaray's writing on the female imaginary as a way of seeing helps to explore this subjective view. The analytic commentary shows how the transformational possibilities offered by the space of enchantment promote the creative process. The published work examined here evidences developments that contribute to an understanding and definition of enchantment in the artistic context, focusing on the use of narrative stitch.

In the medieval tapestry series, *The Lady and the Unicorn* at the Cluny Museum in Paris, the allegory of sight depicts the unicorn gazing into the mirror of Truth that

[7] I am making reference to Michel Serres's *Milieux.* Steven Connor writing on this essay discusses the middlespace, thenatureofbeingin---between.

can be seen by the beholder, but not by the figure of Contemplation (the lady) holding the mirror[8] (Figure 4). Her eyes are inclined towards the unicorn, but her vision is directed inward through the mind's eye suggesting an in-between state. This complex allegory helps to describe the position of the artist during the process of creation in the enchanted context: actively engaged in both worlds, mediating between thought and vision, constructing the reflection of an image known before it is seen.

[8] Michel Serres writes about these tapestries, citing the sixth tapestry which I refer to as portraying the sixth sense, where he describes how the self can apprehend the self. (Davenport, 2010)

Figure 4
The Lady and the Unicorn tapestry (detail)
c. 1500
One of six tapestries
Collection: Musée National du Moyen Âge (former Musée de Cluny) Paris

2.1 Background

My families are seamstresses and tailors on both sides, traced back to my great---grandparents' generation. My mother with her sewing machine and its profusion of coloured fabric was always at the centre of family life. There was an inherited tradition of using thread as a means to support and change lives.

As a daughter of a housemaster, I grew up in a boys' school, where our home was shared with sixty boys. In this masculine academic environment of dark suits where girls were only silent observers, the colour and movement of textiles – and their making into clothing and furnishings – symbolised the domain of womanly activity. Textiles evoked an alternative language of those who lived at the edge of others. Transforming fabric with thread was an important aspect of owning feminine identity as a positive influence.

Fairy tales deepened this alternative viewpoint. My godfather gave me a first edition Andrew Lang Fairy Book at each birthday and Christmas. The way that my otherwise preoccupied father engaged with his daughters was through reading aloud such stories. Thus as Marina Warner describes, I adopted stories as an alternative 'picturel language … fluid and shapeshifting' (2014: online) a way of being. I lived in the everyday with the stories in my head.

Myths were also significant in my reading as a further space to play out private fantasies in everyday life, and the recurrent motif in artwork. Through myth I developed a fascination with Greece. I married a man of Greek origins with whom I had three daughters. In our Greek house and with my sewing machine, I was absorbed in the female roles of wife and mother as a part of traditional village life, until divorce forced me to leave my adopted country.

Autobiography and stories have become interwoven. As one of three sisters and a mother of three daughters, the patterns of female relationships are continually replayed in work and in life. This became the subject of my work and then the object of its making. Originally trained as a painter, I began to use thread after completing my degree and following the death of my mother, part of a recovery process, but also a seemingly natural course due to my background, of merging feminine domestic activity with art.

2.2 Structure

Before the analytical commentary that follows, it is important to begin to assemble a lineage of artistic endeavour in the context of enchantment, exploring the extent to which other women have engaged with this modality of working. I use four case studies that assist in understanding the evolution of enchantment within the context of women artists. For them, creativity gives voice to personal struggles but can be a process of recovery: an unravelling, not in the sense of falling apart, but as preparation for transformation. Phoebe Traquair's work establishes expressive narrative embroidery, the women surrealists' work accesses the dream imagination, Louise Bourgeois uses textiles as self-reparation and Paula Rego's process and storied view reinforce the feminine perspective.

In each case, I will examine where enchantment resides within their artistic practice.

3. Case Studies

3.1 Phoebe Anna Traquair: Allegory and enchantment

> If you shut your eyes and are a lucky one, you may see at times a shapeless pool of lovely pale colours suspended in the darkness; then if you squeeze your eyes tighter, the pool begins to take shape, and the colours become so vivid that with another squeeze they must go on fire. But just before they go on fire you see the lagoon. This is the nearest you ever get to it on the mainland, just one heavenly moment.
>
> J.M. Barrie *Peter Pan* (2012[1911]:105)[9]

J.M. Barrie's (2012[1911]:105) evocation of the mermaids' lagoon concerns a closed---eye visualisation[10] beginning as formless colour that becomes a momentary hallucination while standing on solid land. In this act Barrie enjoins the reader to collaborate and enter his world, a Neverland that offers new possibilities with new desires. I will return to Barrie's vision of enchantment by way of examining the art of one of his contemporaries: Phoebe Traquair.

The Glasgow Girls

The late Victorian period saw the emergence of a new 'cultural hegemony' (Burkhauser 2001:21) in which the place of women was re---imagined beyond the domestic space, allowing for political representation and fostering new ideologies of womanhood. Typically, the history of women emerging as artists through stitch begins in this period with the 'Glasgow Girls'. The Glasgow School was a group of artists and designers in the late nineteenth century whose distinct interpretation of Art Nouveau sat alongside the emergence of other European schools, for example,

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9 *The Lion and the Unicorn*, 3(1), 1979, p. 35. (Article) DOI: 10.1353/uni.0.0358. Quoted from: Barrie. J. M. (1911) *Peter and Wendy* (subsequently *Peter Pan*) Chapter 8, 'The Mermaid's Lagoon.'

10 Known as 'phosphine'.

the Viennese Secessionists and the German Jugendstil. The Glasgow School had an enlightened democratic approach to art and to gender, affording international recognition to its female component, who were instrumental in challenging attitudes to female art practice.[11] Jessie Newbery, as head of the Embroidery department at the Glasgow School of Art, raised the status of embroidery within artistic design.[12] She encouraged the use of simple fabrics, rapid techniques like appliqué to prevent over---laboured effects, emphasising the creative potential of embroidery over handicraft (Burkhauser 2001:70). Roszika Parker describes Newbery as 'trangress[ing] the confines of femininity. She speaks the language of desire…reject[ing] the self---denying stance of femininity' (Parker, cited in Callen, 1984:186). Ann Macbeth, her pupil, took over teaching of embroidery at the School of Art in 1904.[13] Her germane book *Educational Needlework* (1913) insists on the creative and imaginative potential of embroidery: 'The boy or girl who uses material and needle freely in independent design ranks on a plane with the scientist who makes a hypothesis, the artist who makes an experiment' (Macbeth 1913: introduction). This was a vision beyond traditional feminine stereotypes of the graceful and decorative. Newbery and Macbeth saw how stitch could express the female voice, but their work was neither narrative in nature nor expressive in aim.

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11 Their progressive teaching methods have had an enduring influence on education in art and design. Like the Arts and Craft Movement of a similar era, they regarded quality in both design and production as elemental to creativity. Many women in the School were also involved in the suffrage movement: 'Students took turns between classes stitching up banners' (Burkhauser, 2001:43–54).

12 It was even rather impressively claimed by the Marxist *Frontline* magazine to be 'a revolution in textiles and embroidery'. See http://www.redflag.org.uk/frontline/14/14glasgowgirls.html frontline 14 McEwan, K. *The Macdonald Sisters and The Glasgow Girls* (Accessed on 18th June 2015).

13 Ann Macbeth was imprisoned for her suffragette activities, something only recently discovered by familyhistorians.

14Dora Wheeler (1856–1940) prel dated Traquair but also began as a painter, worked in largel scale figurative, feminine themes, and 'put much of her own life and heart into her work'. Peck, A. and Irish, C. (2001) *Candace Wheeler – The Art and Enterprise of American Design 1875–1900.* New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, Yale University Press, pp. 145–147.

Phoebe Anna Traquair (1852–1936) is one of the first artists working with thread who we can assess as a contributor to the mode of enchantment.[14] An Irish---born artist working professionally in Edinburgh – where her painted murals in the Arts and Crafts style (1885–1901) are greatly celebrated – she ignored artificial boundaries between fine and applied art, crossing into manuscript illumination, enamels and narrative embroidery. Her works examine spiritual wholeness, drawing on 'current European writing on aesthetics' (Cumming, 2005:61). Traquair's most important embroidered work is *Progress of a Soul* (1893–1902) now in the Scottish National Gallery, incorporating full-scale human figures and intense stitchwork (Figure 5 and 6) which synthesise process with iconography in a symbolist mode.

The *Progress* comprises four panels of two---metre---high embroidery,[15] conceived as a sequential rendering of the passage through life. The figures are life---size and meticulous in detail, with the androgynous Denys (clothed in leopard skin as Dionysus) moving through joy, trauma, loss and new life.[16] Based upon a short story by Walter Pater that leads from pagan to Christian values, it provides Traquair with an opportunity to fuse 'the Celtic with the classical, the sacred and the profane' (2005:65). She moves freely from earthly materiality to heavenly transcendencies using the vibrant intensity of thread.

Traquair's work satisfies the first criterion for enchantment, of entering the world of the narrative. She identifies with the protagonist of her work; the life journey she envisions for Denys maps on to her own struggle for spiritual wholeness. Traquair's immersion in her vision is redemptive. She rescues *Denys's* soul in the embrace of an angelic figure stitched in spirals of luminous effluorescent light. Traquair's

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14 Inspired by Walter Pater's (1887) *Denys l'Auxerrois*.

15 The stages titled by Traquair are: 'The Entrance', 'The Stress', 'Despair', and 'Victory'.

conception of this moment is likened to achieving a 'state of grace'. Van Schepen related enchantment to the theological concept of grace as an aesthetic experience connected to the spiritual state, 'located in presence and absence' (2009:55). This uncertain modality lingering between states satisfies another criterion of enchantment, one that matches Barrie's evocation of suspension between imaginary and real worlds; it may be no coincidence that Traquair knew Barrie and shared some of his preoccupation with other worlds, half---dreamed. Her obsessive working is also an indicator of lingering in enchantment, the would---be 'hypnoid state' of Freud, consequent on needlework.

With Traquair, enchantment can offer discordant juxtapositions and a Neverland that looks like resurrection. It is not about certainty but about constructing pathways to redemption, a 'victory' reached only in another world. Barrie's dilemma of running away or staying at home represents the compelling attraction of the alternative Neverland. If we apply Barrie's visualising process to the act of stitching, slipping into and out of the surface by piercing the fabric, the thread moves from the visible into the imagined domain, with a reassuring certainty of return.

Figures 5 and 6 (detail)
Phoebe Traquair (1852–1936)
Progress of a Soul 1893–
1902
Each of four: 180.67 x 71.20 cm
Silk and gold thread embroidered on linen
Collection: The Scottish National Gallery.

3.2 Enchantment as falling between the conscious and unconscious into the Surrealist Wonderland

> Never imagine yourself not to be otherwise than what it might appear to others that what you were or might have been was not otherwise than what you had been would have appeared to them to be otherwise.
>
> Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (2015[1865]: 110)

Alice's descent down the rabbit hole begins a journey of transformation in which Alice explores alternative registers of consciousness and dreams. Carroll's story reflects the contemporary impact of Darwin's evolutionary theory challenging established beliefs in Biblical creation and Euclidian logic; it describes a world where everything is in flux. This alternative world mocks convention; it allows transgressions of scale or time, and the subversion of certainty: underground is over--ground, Alice bodily shrinks and extends. Even temporality loosens its linear grip. In her 'fluctuating and fragmented personality' (Auerbach 1973:34), Alice builds sense through the emancipating modality of dream. Wonderland becomes a state of mind – an interior site. This is the space explored by the surrealists. Patricia Allmer remarked at how the women surrealists in particular 'tease out [...] the marvellous in the everyday' (2009:13). Here, it is posed that the surrealist vision does more than show an imaginary world or demonstrate the strangeness of reality; it enters the space of enchantment.

The motif of Wonderland can serve us as a lens through which to interpret the surrealist journey. Ilene Susan Fort and Teresa Arcq remark that Alice's multivalent personality is shared by many women surrealists (2012:27). In the 'Second Surrealist Manifesto', André Breton posits that there is a 'certain point of the mind at which life, death, the real and the imagined, past, present and future … [cease] to be

perceived as contradictions' (Breton, cited in Femen Orenstein 2012:173). This seems to iterate the modality of uncertainty that is needed for enchantment. The surrealists recast the status quo through their wish to liberate the unconscious, promote risk, and allow chance to enter invention.[17] In the surrealist imagination the mind stretches into the subconscious where objects are used for their symbolic value. Privileging alternative states as a higher form of consciousness is another characteristic of enchantment, one that enables aspects of dreamlike space to remain grounded in the material world.

With our focus on the feminine it is helpful to identify why we look only at female surrealists. Breton's belief in the female muse, the *femme---enfant* who through her own innocence (like Carroll's Alice) gave access to the unconscious, placed women foremost as objects of desire. It was only from the 1930s that the surrealist movement began to include women as artists. Their work, sometimes still cast in the male surrealist vision, allows female identity to emerge from an interior (inside body) viewpoint. Often their work borrows from the archetypal to represent the individual feminine unconscious. Whitney Chadwick (185:67) saw in these archetypes the formation of new narrative structures through relationships to 'the psychic avatar and the spiritual guide' (Chadwick 2012:16). For example, the angel is a recurrent motif, in movement between territorial attachment and detachment. The angel represents an alternative self, able to transit freely between the boundaries of the external body and the inner life.

The women surrealists' work often combines the artist and subject as one person in a cycle of self---revelation and self---creation. They portray themselves 'focusing primarily on their heads (minds), eyes, and hands to depict their inner lives, hopes,

[17] Patricia Allmer describes the surrealist concept of 'communicating vessels' based on the scientific experiment of exchanging gases between vessels through a tube, as 'a metaphor for the dream which fuses inside and outside, reality and imagination' (2009:12).

dreams and nightmares' (Fort and Arcq, 2012:42). Thus the fictional self dissolves into the actual, the ruptured self becomes reborn. I look here, in particular, at the work of two women surrealists who offer insight into enchantment: Leonora Carrington and Dorothea Tanning, each of whom explore aspects of symbolism and feminine psyche balanced between fantasy and everyday ritual.

Carrington's life was extraordinary – she was an English woman who ran away from England to live with Max Ernst in France; later facing mental breakdown, she was institutionalised; she subsequently escaped the Occupation (while Ernst was imprisoned) and spent her remaining life in Mexico where she drew on its occult beliefs and folk mythologies. Carrington's works are 'structurally reminiscent of medieval panel painting' as they are filled with detailed figures which imply a mysterious'pseudo---narrative'and described by SusanAberth as'impenetrablebut archetypally familiar' (1992:83–85). The traditional sites of the domestic ritual become stages for voyages into magical worlds 'that unravel like fairy tales' (Chadwick, 1985: 195). In Carrington's *Grandmother Moorhead's Aromatic Kitchen* (1975) (Figure 7), the kitchen is seen as a place of feminine power where spells are concocted and indeed Carrington started to work with egg tempera 'to mimic culinary procedure' (Gerzso, cited in Aberth 2010:66). Thus Carrington uses the kitchen as an in-between site where magic can meet daily life. The egg tempera medium which creates an opalescent surface with a laborious technique, is built up of many small gestures reminiscent of stitch. Obsessional working is a matter that will warrant further discussion in the context of entering the space of enchantment.

In *The House Opposite* (1945) (Figure 8), a Celtic 'other world' of women is depicted by images of resurrection and transformation. Complexly staged, the picture traces a path from the world of childhood to adulthood where cook---magician---alchemist is

Figure 7
Leonora Carrington (1917–2011)
Grandmother Moorhead's Aromatic Kitchen
1975
79 x 124.5 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy of the Goddard Art Center, Oklahoma

Figure 8
Leonora Carrington (1917–2011)
The House Opposite
1945
33 x 82 cm
Tempera on panel
Private collection

the catalyst for metamorphosis and creation. One room connects to another with ladders, stairways and tunnels, with glimpses of outer regions and dark underground spaces, perhaps a metaphor for the human body. The work probes the source of the female creative process where Carrington expresses the interrelation between temporal zones as 'liminal' (Chadwick, cited in Aberth, 2010:33). This liminal space is viewed by the anthropologist Victor Turner as a *time* of enchantment indicating what *might* happen (Turner, cited in Aberth, 2010:33), suggesting the modality required for enchantment.

The work of Dorothea Tanning uses 'convulsive emotionalism' (Chadwick, 1985:135) as she oscillates between the instinctive and the knowing, between meticulous realism and the unconscious. Breton described the psychic reality as 'the dizzy descent into ourselves, the flooding with light of our secret places' (Chadwick, 1985:138). In Tanning's work, unconscious is threatening, able to penetrate behind closed doors. Behind her images, we sense another presence lurking. Karla Heubner describes the girl figures in *Palaestra* (1947) as, 'imaginative, and disruptive … active explorers and tireless observers' (2003) (Figure 9). Tanning's reference to the body is visceral. Her textile soft sculptures of the 1960s and 1970s embody the sensual in ambiguous figural forms. They sprawl as manifestations of copulation, conception and rebirth arriving replete in post---coital *tristesse* (Figure 10). As she relates, 'in league with my sewing machine, I pulled and stitched and stuffed the banal materials of human clothing in a transformative process where the most astonished witness was myself. Almost before I knew it, I had an 'oeuvre', a family of sculptures that were the avatars' (Tanning, 2001:281). Tanning's fabric works make tacit thoughts visible and material. While Tanning's paintings seem to oscillate between reality and imagination, the textile works sustain the modality of uncertainty needed for enchantment. Working with textile materials seems to be the stimulus for entering an alternative state where she is both maker and witness to making.

Carrington's and Tanning's interaction with enchantment suggests that the spaces we inhabit possess fantastic territories for development. For these artists, the processes of making are often ritualistic and draw from domestic activities. Victor Turner places Carrington's work 'betwixt---and---between the normal' (Turner, cited in Aberth, 2010:33). Tanning's work hovers on the margins of playfulness and menace, reflecting her inner state. These contradictions Whitney Chadwick describes as between 'sleep and waking, conscious and unconscious' (Chadwick, 1988:2). Thus, some women surrealists went beyond the momentary visit to Wonderland to a sustained betweenness as a site where change could happen.

Figure 9
Dorothea Tanning (1910–2012)
Palaestra
1947
314 x 450 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection: The Dorothea Tanning Foundation, New York.

Figure 10
Dorothea Tanning (1910–2012)
Nue couchée
1969–1970
38.5 x 10.89 x 53.5 cm
Cotton, cardboard, wool and
plastic balls
Collection: Tate.

3.3 Re---enchantment of a falling woman; the work of Louise Bourgeois

The Biblical Eve is the prototypical fallen woman who through her reach for knowledge has lost her innocence. Her 'gift' is the wounded condition of woman having fallen from grace. In John Milton's *Paradise Regained* (2011[1671]), the poet suggests by the term *felix culpa* a fortunate fall, where through sin, recovery and redemption are made possible. Such reversals are the theme of the sequel to *Paradise Lost*.

Such reversals are essential to the process of self-restoration explored in the work of Louise Bourgeois.[18] In her work, textiles signifies redemption and womanhood with 'emotions and states of mind as embodied forms' (Morris, 2003:28).[19] Textile softness contrasts with the typical hard materials of the sculptor, with an underside or reverse offering a new meaning and dimension to the outer surface. In stating 'It is the reverse that tells you the truth' (Caux, 2003:56), Bourgeois refers to the back of a restored tapestry that shows what is original and what is replacement, but also intimates a more universal observation about the textile form. Bourgeois indicates where the emotional truth is both held and hidden within an embodied form.

Bourgeois recounts her fears: 'My early work is the fear of falling. Later on it became the art of falling. How to fall without hurting yourself' (Bourgeois, cited in Coxon, 2010:22). Textiles for Bourgeois is synonymous with her childhood since her parents were tapestry restorers; she was encouraged from an early age to learn

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[18] Louise Bourgeois (1911–2010).

[19] These themes of Bourgeois are parallel to those explored in *Eve Falling from Grace* (1986), one my first significant works made in textiles and the series of recovery portraits titled Head (Publication 3)

the trade and given tasks mending the woven images. Later, textiles became linked to the falling apart of family, and the fear of falling from grace since the family's public respectability obscured her father's infidelity with a mistress who, as Bourgeois' tutor, lived in the family house. The family tensions are a constant theme in her work and are brought out particularly in the use of textiles in her late works. But if the wound was embodied by textiles, then it might be healed through textiles since for Bourgeois, textiles act as a metaphor for recovery and becoming whole. Thread and stitching can bind the self together and prevent psychological and actual falling apart with the needle as a symbol of repair of her damaged past. 'When I was growing up all the women in my house used needles … I always had a fascination with the needle, the magic power of the needle. The needle is used to repair damage. It's a claim to forgiveness' (cited in Coxon, 2010:76). We will see that the enchanted modality is used in the context of psychological repair.

For Bourgeois, the material memories of dress and home furnishing could be refashioned to create a place where the universal roles of womanhood are altered (see Figure 11). With textiles, Bourgeois took on the seamstress role of her mother as a reversal from passive victim. Using the female tools of her childhood she could repair life's disenchantments. 'I need to make things … I need the physical acting out' as a protection against the 'cold of anxiety' (cited in Coxon, 2010:91). Bourgeois literally immersed herself in textiles as a counter to her fear of falling into chaos.[20]

[20] 'I feel they must be of such height and weight and size that you can wrap yourself in them' (Bourgeois cited in Morris, 2003:25).

Figure 11 Louise Bourgeois (1911–2010)
Seamstress/Mistress/Distress/Stress
1995
Fonds national d'art contemporain, Paris

Photo: Yves Chenot

As a seamstress, Bourgeois could configure a new understanding of herself; thread acts as a suture to repair the vulnerabilities that constantly preoccupied her. 'My drawings [and stitch[21]] are a kind of rocking or stroking and an attempt to find a kind of peace. Peaceful rhythm. Like rocking a baby to sleep' (cited in Coxon, 2010:93). Here, Bourgeois gives a hint of entering an altered mentality during the process of making work, one I see as entering the zone of enchantment.[22] While Bourgeois might rock, she did not abandon reality, but while consciously cutting and re---stitching cloth, she effectedrepair of the psyche. She also acknowledges the maternal, recalling Irigaray's definition of the feminine in the maternal (Irigaray, 1991:34---46).Hilary Robinsonalso signalsthat Bourgeois' textilemakingreconnects the significance of maternal woman in her self---representation (Robinson, 2006:145). Not only Bourgeois' prolific work, but her numerous interviews describing her work, contribute knowledge of this reparative stance.

Bourgeois'*Head*works are life---likefabricformsjoined togetherwithcomplex stitching (Figure 12).[23] These are damaged women (if they are female) who look directly forwards. As with my own portraits of recovery (*Heads* Publication 3) these works areicon---likebutwhileBourgeois's*Heads*aremoreobviouslyinpain,both suggest stitch as an agent to reconstruct. Thus falling becomes a symbol of reversal containing both upward and downward movement, like a stitch which enters the fabric and draws it back to make it whole. Falling apart for Bourgeois is the process of becoming whole using textiles in a cycle of construction, deconstruction and reconstruction. Like Milton's 'fortunate fall', these actions connect reparation with re---enchantment.

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[21] I have included stitch as within this description.

[22] Years of psychotherapy probably made her too self---aware to entirely leave reality; her structured symbolism suggests a strong measure of control.

[23] Made from 1990 onwards.

Figure 12 Louise
Bourgeois with one of her *Head* fabric works
2009
Photo: Alex Van Gelder

3.4 Paula Rego and telling the feminine story

The writer Virginia Woolf describes a zone of silence occupied by the artist at the centre of a work of art (cited in Lisboa, 2003:15). It is possible to see this zone as a site where the order of things can be changed and bring the real world into what is imaginedfromwithin. PaulaRego's narrativepaintings re---tell women'sexperience with a voice that emerges vociferously from the inside silent zone reclaiming a space outside for women.[24]

Rego's works are passionate, dramatic stories of love and its reversals, where disaster and revenge are viewed from the female central zone. Her stories are concerned with the vulnerability of being mother, daughter and lover within a 'binary world whose territorial lines are demarcated by the battle of the sexes' (Rosengarten, cited in Lisboa, 2003:2). Her female figures fight with their gendered containment; power is rebalanced even beyond equality: 'I can make them obedient and murderous at the same time' (Maya Jaggi, 2004). Rego's women are unpretentiously exposed in their raw ugliness but made beautiful through their femininity.

Intimately biographical, Rego's human dramas are domestic scenes with looming menace (Figure 13). These scenes are often around the kitchen table or in the bedroom; familiar, familial places where women can be powerful, and spaces that are appropriate as sites of enchantment because they are sites for transformation. Home becomes a stage where 'her colours are those of the table' (Willing, 1997:37), a setting of feminine guile, of childish knowing confronting horror, but where meaning is never closed. Marina Warner reminds us that, suspended

[24] Paula Rego (1935–).

between memory and observation, Rego's experience as girl---child is mingled with experience of womanhood as a 'camera lucida *of the mind's eye'* (Warner, 2003: online). In portraying different life stages at once, Rego depicts her emotions embodied in the girll child's view. The past is juxtaposed with the present, indicating how it is possible to confront change as both 'remembered and anticipated' in order to imagine who she herself wants to be (Bradley, 1997:28). Fiona Bradley calls this a 'willed coincidence' (1997:32) where Rego forces the inner private and outer public worlds to be experienced through each other to form new female archetypes as her own folk narrative. The domestic story is told as 'corrupted folklore'[25] as a way to disrupt traditional order. For example, in *The Goat-Footed Lady,* the feet (2012)[26] 'betray woman's devilishness' (Nikki Verdon, 2013: online) with the implication of future crisis lying in wait (Figure 14).

Rego's working process involves 'thinking … intimately bound up with doing' (Bradley, 1997: 32). 'I'd start making the creatures on pieces of paper, knowing what they were going to be and when I had them I would cut them up. The pleasure of the cutting was part of it, it was a thrilling thing to do. Bodily, sexually, thrilling' (Bradley, 1997: 9). Her life-size hand-made stuffed textile dummies serve as models, 'metaphors and emblems for the world of Rego's imagination, phantoms of memory, myth and nightmare' (Brown, 2009: online). Rego's subject and threatening sense of violence is apparent in the process. Her method is vigorous and sensual: pastel paintings which Bradley calls 'conspicuously gestural' (1997:28). The repeated pastel mark of these works operates like a stitch, tacit in 'their creation' (1997:28). Their repetitive gestural quality suggests the performative engagement of entering enchantment.

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[25] http://www.saatchigallery.com/artists/paula_rego.htm (Accessed on 12th January 2015).

[26] This is based on a story by the nineteenth---century Portuguese writer Alexandre Herculano, which in turn is based on an eleventh---century folk tale.

Figure 13
Paula Rego (1935–)
The Family
1988
Acrylic on canvas backed paper
213 x 213 cm

Figure 14
Paula Rego (1935 ---)
The Goat-Footed Lady (detail)
2012
Oil pastel on paper
Size unknown

Maria Lisboa describes how feminist histories turn the personal into the political in Rego's work. Rego's Portuguese folk stories encounter the politics of her birthplace as 'an act of autobiography' made universal (Schoeser, 2003:19). Her figures are located in a 'shallow space' (Willing, cited in Bradley, 1997:34); pictorially and conceptually, background and foreground exchange and overlap positions of the familial interior, the political worlds of Portugal and Rego's artistic imagination as the betweenness of the enchanted space. As she says, 'In pictures you have an emotional freedom to express everything. You can't do that in life – you wouldn't want to' (Rego, cited in Jaggi, 2013: online). Enchantment can be viewed as determinedly entered and emerged from as the feminine emerges from silence resonating as an alternative voice.

3.5 A Lineage of Enchantment

The women artists examined here stand amid movements of symbolism, surrealism, postwar modernism and feminism. Frances Morris describes Bourgeois as being outside the 'avant-garde notion of modernism' (Morris, cited in Gibbons, 2007:16). But they are both inside these conceptual categories and outside of them. Seen together, some common elements emerge that can be aligned with our definition of enchantment. Firstly, the use of narrative, and especially the autobiographical narrative as a means of engaging with, or entering the work. Next, pictorial sites that look familiar but do not follow ordinary rules: from wonderland to dreamspace to psychic landscape. These are states of being that hover between dream and daily reality.

This quality of enchantment is closely tied to the making process. These women employ repeated gestures in making their work, movements that can be

characterised as 'obsessive' and constant. These are used as a means of immersion in the work that characterises the enchanted modality. These actions may emerge from domestic rituals, often to do with cooking or sewing. Carrington's painting technique is allied to the kitchen as an alchemical site. For Bourgeois, sewing as a domestic activity extends into art as a natural process of being 'femme---maison' since 'sewing involves hand and eye and is simple to accomplish at the kitchen table' (Morris, 2003:23). Such repeated actions do not induce Freud's 'hypnoid state' but rather a fully immersive, intensive reality.[27]

This is a transformative reality. Apart from Traquair's other---wordly transgendered landscape, the artists are firmly implanted in the feminine domestic space. The autobiographical, linked with family and home, emerges as a prime site for the enchanted imaginary. But it is not a biographical telling, rather a biographical reworking. Rego's table and bed are 'sites for playing out of relations' (Morris, 2003:280). Bourgeois' home as childhood site of trauma is a space to be revised.

Morris describes how home 'is a burden … at the same time it grows and is nourished by the female body landscape' (Morris, 2003:26). For Carrington, the home is another form of body, while the others work directly with the human figure, with home as a site of inner self and outer experience of the sensory. The rituals of home and its deep embodied meanings seem to be a catalyst for enchantment. Marina Warner describes stories as deep 'mother tongues' and 'which can imagine possibilities of transformation' (2014: online). The space of enchantment is a recuperative space; the narrative allows alternative versions of being in these uncertain new realms. The artists viewed here suggest a lineage for enchantment that is suited to the feminine experience, linking the everyday with artistic vision. The artistic experience allows a true physical engagement, a space

[27] See page 14

between imagination and reality where memories can be revisited, taken apart and re---made. It is this view of enchantment that will be examined further in an analytical commentary on selected pieces from my published work.

4. Commentary on Selected Published Works

4.1 *Odyssey* (2003) and *Odyssey---Hermes and the Lotos--- Eaters* (2003)

The companion works *Odyssey* (2003) (Figures 15 and 16) and *Odyssey---Hermes and the Lotos---Eaters* (2003) (Figure 17) (the *Odyssey series)* formed the key works in a collection made for my first significant solo exhibition *Mythscapes* in 2003 to 2005.[28] Based on the epic narrative poem of Homer's *Odyssey,* these works marked a new departure as large---scale complex, figural compositions rather than single figure works.

Homer's epic work contains self---reflective themes concerning rites of passage, vision and endurance, which act as the conceptual reference for my process of making and for the completed artwork. The unseen was an important aspect of making, not only because the works were largely made 'unseen' (working from the back and bundled into the machine), but also because the unseen acts as the passage to another place. It is in the translation between seen and unseen where the space of enchantment lies: the unseen within my situation of making is what is seen in the mind's---eye made material. These works were made as a consequence of losing my home and marriage in Greece; they re---imagine this exile in archetypal form. Persistently in the *Odyssey*, the motif of personal dislocation, where the steadiness of home has become unstable, is linked with the theme of individual and shared narratives. The *Odyssey series* draws parallels between myself and Odysseus, and between myself and his wife Penelope that are framed differently; the figural Odysseus encounters adventure as an act of self---discovery but his depiction is viewed

[28] Documented in a monograph with essays by Audrey Walker, Mary Schoeser and Sara Roberts.

Figures 15 and 16 (detail)
Alice Kettle
Odyssey --- Publication 1
2003
385 x 185 cm Thread
stitched on canvas
Photo: James Newell

from the perspective of Penelope the maker. Embodied in the fabric, my Penelopian womanly view suggests the female ever present behind the work. Thus in *Odyssey* the pictorial process equates with Penelope and thread, even while the image depicts Odysseus.

Penelope, as ever---faithful wife, represents home and is defined by her faith in Odysseus' homecoming. Her 'outward vulnerability belies great strength ... who keeps faith by weaving and unweaving' (Roberts 2003:49). In this textile work, with its repetitive gestures, she seeks to frustrate adversity and influence her plight. In Greek mythology weaving is linked to fate and 'cloth---making to...creating a personal destiny' (Kathryn Sullivan Kruger 2008:28). In Penelope's fateful weaving we see a powerful action of self---protection. The *Odyssey series* were sewn by day and concealed by night (to protect them from being accounted in court proceedings), in actions not un---reminiscent of Penelope's day and night deceit of slowly constructing and deconstructing Laertes' shroud.

As in Homer's poem, my work explores the relationship between two separate yet entwined parts (husband and wife), viewed as two concomitant worlds experienced in opposing realms. These experiences occur in contradictory forces, characterised by sea and land; and by the juxtaposition between movement and stability. The unpredictable sea world is in flux, balanced by the earthbound, claustrophobic, everydayness of Ithaca. These unsteady and fixed worlds reflect the experiences of those within them. The *Odyssey series*, made in a time of turmoil, recreated for me a sense of home: a 'place in the world' (Casey, 1993:xiv). Making the works encouraged letting go of grounded home and partaking in Odyssean wandering but always examined through the perspective of Penelope, as I made and unmade, in the process of relinquishing outer home but reinforcing a more stable inner home.

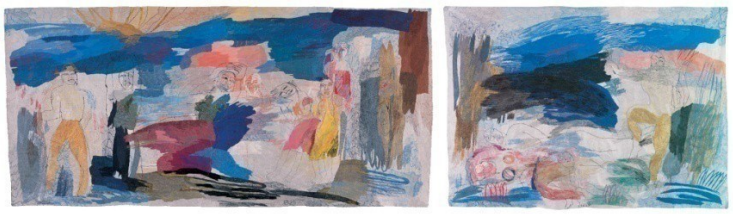
Elisabeth Frost discusses the poet Louise Gluck's contemporary *Meadowlands* based on the *Odyssey* (1996:24---25). My interpretation is analogous to Gluck's Penelope: neither 'the patient Penelope of Homer nor the resourceful Penelope of feminist revisions' (Frost, 1996:24) but forbearing, even self---punishing. The first—person feminine narrator in the *Odyssey series* is extant but unseen, finding in her weaving a private solace. The worlds of Odysseus and Penelope are mutual and co-constituted creating an 'other' world through thread (Seamon, 2011). Odysseus lives within this thready world but Penelope is embodied in its making.

Janet Donohoe provides a sense of the 'power of this primordial place'; she says the knowledge of home informs all experiences that we have outside of it (1997:29). Donohoe places us within the phenomenological experience of home, that of giving us 'a here from which the world discloses itself, a there to which we can go' (Dardel, cited in Donohoe, 2011: online). Kirsten Jacobson extends this thinking to the tension of being---at---home and being away from home which she suggests can deepen both experiences, and 'shift the lived ground of homes and absorb otherness into at---homeness' (Jacobson, cited in Seamon, 2011:7). Thus home defines how we are elsewhere and in returning home the outside world brings a new vision of home. In the *Odyssey series* this process of integration of otherness with home acts to re---enchant a new place since it gives us the ability to move into the world and dwell within it. The feeling of home is recreated as a place of self-discovery and solidness in the fabric of the *Odyssey series,* providing a new place to be at home. This creates a magical link between myself, the work and the relationships in---between.

These works, like Gluck's poetry, intertwined my personal lived experiences with tales and the history that surrounded me. The enchantment occurs in the space

where the concept of home as a place we can go *to* and the concept of finding a home within myself become synthesised.

Figure 17
Alice Kettle
Odyssey – Hermes and the Lotos---Eaters --- Publication 1
2003
285 x 185 cm Thread
stitched on canvas
Photo: James Newell



4.2 *Looking Forwards to the Past* (2007)

Looking Forwards to the Past (2007) was a commissioned artwork, documented in the monograph of the same title and date. The work depicts the history of a place that is personally familiar through lived experience, as well as through recorded history (Figure 18). [29] It was made for a new model of library seen as the central focus of cultural activity in Winchester. The commission was the largest the County Arts Office had made, and they were mindful of public sensitivities over spending money. The brief encouraged a sympathetic relationship between textile and the building, recognising embroidery's potential for monumental scale and surface responsive to ambient, changing light. Embroidery was viewed as a mediator between the building and public with its familiar associations to monumental tapestries as narrative chronicles. Grayson Perry's grand tapestries, like my stitched works, acknowledge the power of textiles to tell a story made epic through its material substance. Perry ironically elevates 'the commonplace dramas of modern British life' through textiles traditionally hung in stately homes and portraying majestic allegorical themes (Perry, 2014:online). In my own vision, the fusion of familiar and invented imagery was explored as a means of connecting the public in a continuous present view of the city. This personal transformed view fulfils a modality of enchantment in which present day reality sits equally alongside the city's many past manifestations. In offering this trans---temporal zone, the public were invited to be drawn into the enchantment. While making this work under the

[29] This was a major commission for the Winchester Discovery Centre from Hampshire Arts Office. It is documented in a monograph *Looking Forwards to the Past* (2007) published by Ruthin Craft Centre, Wales, with three commissioned essays from Dr Jessica Hemmings, Dr Jane Webb and Dr Melanie Miller. *Looking Forwards to the Past*, a DVD (2007), was also produced by MMU's Visual Resources Centre by Alex McErlain and John Davis. The artwork was reproduced in Mary Schoeser (ed.) (2012) *Textiles: The Art of Mankind* (London: Thames and Hudson); and in Kettle, A. & McKeating, J. (2010) *Machine Stitch Perspective* (London: A & C Black).

Figure 18
Alice Kettle
Looking Forwards to the Past --- Publication 2
2007
16500 x 330 cm
Thread stitched on canvas
Photo: Joe Low
Winchester Discovery Centre

public gaze and outside of the familiar workplace, stitching became part of a strange unspoken dialogue. Immersed in the vastness of this undertaking and trying to mitigate my inhibiting awareness of the viewers, I adopted a conscious self---absorption as though in a glass---walled cell, translating the ambient voices into stitches (Figure 19).

The work is within the tradition of the monumental stitched narrative of the canonical Bayeux Tapestry. I was conscious of the associations with the nunnery in Winchester where reputedly parts of the Bayeux Tapestry were stitched. However, *Looking Forwards to the Past* was not made as the devotional work of the secluded and self---denying nun, such as the one Roszika Parker refers to in regard to the medieval closeted orders(Parker,2012:39). Itwasundertakeninaself---constructed imaginary seclusion that allowed public interaction to blend with private fantasy. The sites and sounds of voices were gathered from the city and reinterpreted in an unsystematic taxonomy of 'life in the present that we see' (Webb 2007:5). Jessica Hemmings describes this haphazard scattering of references as 'a chart of open---minded references' (Hemmings, 2007:2), stitched together as the collage of a postmodern bricoleur. It sits between a real and fictional view of the city, drawing from its chronologies at crossing points which are synchronic and playful. There are no buildings depicted; the work is a coloured landscape with no apparent perspective and figures depicted in overlapping realms (Figure 20).

This narrative texture pays passing homage to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, a collection of tales told by pilgrims while they journeyed along the Pilgrim's Way. This historic path to the shrine of Thomas Becket in Canterbury begins in Winchester, with Nuns Walk passing my own door. *Looking Forwards to the Past* became an 'Embroiderer's Tale' evolving into a 'narrative with neither beginning nor end … revealing what it feels like to have heart and soul bound to a place and its

Figure 19
Alice Kettle
Looking Forwards to the Past (in progress) – Publication 2
2007
16500 x 330 cm
Thread stitched on canvas
Photo: Joe Low
Winchester Discovery Centre

people' (Webb 2007:6).

The making offered parallels to the allegorical journey of John Bunyan's protagonist Christian in *Pilgrim's Progress*. In Bunyan's work the quest of the soul begins in the City of Destruction and ends in the Celestial City after strenuous wanderings through the wilderness; a metaphor for inward personal resolution in the face of difficulty. The making of the monstrously large work (supposedly the biggest in the world) set me extreme physical and emotional challenges, in Bunyan's terms: solitude, loss of direction, doubt and despair. Taking on Christian's role helped me to believe I could complete the project. In its ups and downs, parallels can be drawn with falling in and out of enchantment. But unlike Bunyan, who saw the 'Enchanted Ground' as a place that makes one want to sleep and never wake, a belief in transformation and imaginative alternatives allowed an exit.

In *Looking Forwards to the Past*, Winchester was viewed as Italo Calvino's 'invisible city'; a city that can be virtual, constructed of ideas, with secret potentialities in its 'refractions, reflections, the play of light and shadow' (Winterson 2001). As Jeanette Winterson sums up, 'Imagining *a city* is imagining yourself' (2001).[30] If the city became an embodiment of myself, as Calvino (1997:149) contends,

> there runs an invisible thread that binds one living being to another for a moment, then unravels, then is stretched again between moving points as it draws new and rapid patterns so that at every second the unhappy [city]contains a happy [city] unaware of its own existence.

[30] She describes Venice which I have replaced in name with *a city*.

Figures 20 and 21
Alice Kettle
Looking Forwards to the Past –
Publication 2
2007
16500 x 320 cm
Thread stitched on canvas
Photo right: Joe Low
Photo below: Daniel Keeler
Winchester Discovery Centre

Looking Forwards to the Past has solidified its iconic status as a sturdy backdrop in the heart of the building. The enchantment however is through its making. The art work re---imagined a city 'viewed inside and out, night and day...' as a confluence of contributions from other makers, and a repository of stories (Hemmings, 2007:2) (Figure 21). Pennina Barnett writes about the fold of cloth as poetic and infinitely complex (Barnett, (1999) cited by Hemmings, 2012:186). The surface dimension implies the folded underneath without beginning or end. As a space of encounter she suggests 'the continuity of the fold is to think in the continuous present. It is to believe in the presence of the moment, of the fold as the power to 'begin' again...'(Barnett, (1999) cited by Hemmings, 2012:186). In being drawn into the city's narratives, responding to the present sounds but removed in an interior frame of mind, enchantment occurred through making this work. It came under the spell of the preoccupying struggle of handling the enormous cloth, while imagining the past city not beneath the modern but an intimate part of its folds and hidden aspects, both emerging together from a wilderness of thread.

4.3 *Heads* (2008–10)

This research examines three works entitled *Rupt, Sol* and *Cor* (Figures 22, 23 and 24) (known as *Heads)* (2009–2010) as typical examples from the *Head Series* (2008–2011).[31] One of the earliest examples, *Metamorphosis* (2003) (Figure 25) was shown in *Fabric of Myth* (2008) by which time the idea had more fully taken hold. Kathryn Sullivan Kruger's essay in the associated catalogue writes of 'the mental landscape of artists whose personal stories imbue the cloth they make with significance' (2008:10). These works use textile to make whole the broken self.

The series of *Heads* is an ongoing project returned to periodically. *Rupt, Sol* and *Cor* were made as a group following the first more tentative piece. They were inspired by the *Tribute* heads (1975) [32](Figure 26) of Elizabeth Frink, made as a homage to victims of persecution, and by the arguably more female fabric heads of Louise Bourgeois which act as renditions of human vulnerability (Figure 27). My works share common counter---themes of victimisation. Victimisation is encountered not only passively but also as the victim of one's own self---persecuting tendencies. Enchantment offers a transformative path away from victimisation. *Metamorphosis* used folded stitched fabric as a new figurative flat form, whereas in *Rupt, Sol* and *Cor* I cut the discarded fragments of *Looking Forwards to the Past* (Publication 2*)* and re---formed them into high---relief works. The cutting and rehabilitation

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[31] These works were exhibited in the 7th International Triennial of Contemporary Textile *Arts of Tournai: The Five Continents: Woven World* (2011), and documented in an accompanying catalogue. Others from the same series, including *Head II*, were exhibited in *Allegory* (2009) Crafts Study Centre, UCA, Farnham (pictured in the catalogue). A critical essay sees the portrait heads as 'a new stage in [the artist's] own creative development'. Olding, S. (2009)

[32] Elizabeth Frink's *Tribute* heads (1975), a monumental group of four male heads, which refer to people who had died for their beliefs. 'In a sense, these sculptures are a tribute to Amnesty International,' the sculptor said. 'The heads represent the inhumanity of man – they are the heads of victims.' http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary---dame---elisabeth---frink---1456195.html(Accessed on 12th July 2015).

Figure 22
Alice Kettle
Heads – Publication 3
Cor
2010
65 x 82 cm
Thread stitched on fabric
Photo: Joe Low

Figure 23
Alice Kettle
Heads – Publication 3
Sol
2008
65 x 82 cm
Thread stitched on fabric
Photo: Joe Low

Figure 24
Alice Kettle
Heads – Publication 3
Rupt
2008
59 x 75 cm
Thread stitched on fabric
Photo: Joe Low

Figure 25
Alice Kettle
Metamorphosis
2003
59 x 59 cm
Thread stitched on fabric
Photo: Joe Low

of these works offered a metaphorical reflection of vulnerability and recuperation in my experience of the feminine condition. The intense labour required to produce *Looking Forwards to the Past* led to physical exhaustion and emotional fragmentation, which *Heads* attempted to resolve, finding in this reassembly of fragments a re-making of myself into a composite whole. Frink found the head 'infinitely variable… emotions are in their faces' (Frink and Lucie-Smith, 1994:61). *Rupt, Sol* and *Cor* allowed confrontation of emotions and the power to rebind them into a new visage, at once vital and fragile.

The results were visually allied with Cubism of the 1920s, taking on a multi-viewpoint perspective of hyperbolic lines. On a conceptual level, the shifting locations of these fragments through the reassembly process allowed for the exploration of ideas around unstable identity. The *Heads* became fractured self-portraits, finding in the collaged fragments of prior works new ways of reforming expressions, held together with stitch as with the surgeon's suture. The lines of thread literally and metaphorically *draw* together a new identity that arises from seeming chaos and is never completely resolved, but remains open to further change and reconstitution. The philosopher Michel Serres describes this revelatory condition as 'the one who can cross to the other side of himself' (Serres, cited in Connor, 2005:323). As portraits that lie between the oppositional states of falling apart and certainty, the fabric sections reflect this internal dialogue of self-encounter.

There is the presence of a darker alter ego in the raw fabric edges and gaps in *Heads*. They suggest maimed faces with fabric dismembered from former artworks as if self-harming but in a manner that the psychologist Anna Motz calls self-creation. Motz suggests that cutting skin can be a permanent marker or signature made as a desire (Straker, cited in Motz, 2006:82) 'to preserve life, and to represent and

contain unbearable states of mind' in an inter---subjective space (Motz,2010:83). Therefore self---harm, like my cutting and re---stitching, represents the 'divided sense of the self, where one part is aggressor and the other victim' (Motz, 2010:83) made whole.

The *Hostage* series (Figure 28), made in response to wartime brutality by the French artist Fautrier, parallel this 'mutilation of material' (Amy Dempsey, 2000). Fautrier created heads by glueing layers of paper and applied thick impasto to evoke the unsettling disfigurement of the flesh through torture. The writer Malraux, however, viewed these works as redemptive (Amy Dempsey, 2000). Textiles may have even more power to evoke the human body. Michel Serres describes cloth as the 'skin holding all the senses' (Serres, cited in Connor, 2005:322). In the case of Louise Bourgeois' *Heads*, the presence of textile is palpable 'for re---creating the emotions of creative and destructive aptitudes' and I would suggest for making the feminine whole (Caux, 2003:7–56).[33]

Bettelheim describes the process of storytelling where 'evil is as omnipresent as is virtue' (2010:7). He describes the story as exploration, not to resolve its symptomatic beginnings, but to experience turmoil. The enchantment of the storied world allows the recognition of repressed, even base feelings that illuminate the dark self. In *Heads*, the extremes of rupture and repair allow the split of emotions to bear witness to the ambiguous human condition (Zipes, 2002:121). These works allow me to be central to the creation, destruction and reconstruction of the materials of the self. Thus, I am able to venture beyond reality while holding on to a part of it, one of the conditions for the enchanted imaginary. Hence, the material process opens the intermediary condition that gives entrance to enchantment.

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[33] Louise Bourgeois revisited her personal experiences of trauma, reconstituting memories of the past by stitching cloth recovered from that past, to produce figurative sculptures.

These works exchange victimhood for participative healing as the enchanted space enables wholeness to be sourced from a fragmented past.

Figure 26
Elisabeth Frink (1930–1993)
Tribute Head I, II, III, IV
1975
Height: 72 cm
Bronze
Collection: Terry Dintenfass Gallery, New York.

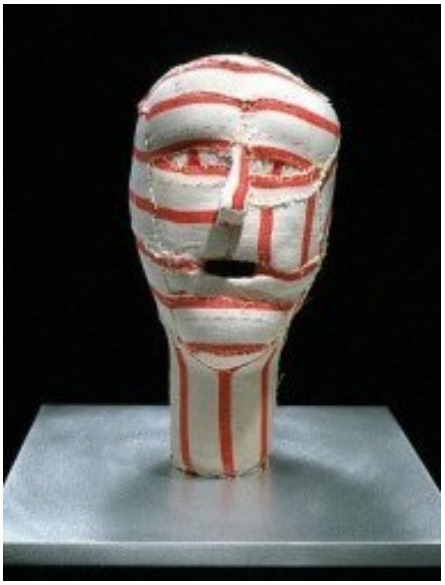

Figure 27 Louise Bourgeois (1911–2010)
Untitled
2002
Fabric and aluminium
30.5 x 30.5 x 30.5 cm
Photo: Christopher Burke
© Louise Bourgeois Trust/DACS, London/VAGA, New York 2011

Figure 28
Jean Fautrier (1898–1964)
Head of a Hostage, no. 20
1944
Impasto
Size unknown

4.4 *Pause* and *Pause II* (2009)

Pause and *Pause II* (2009) form the key works in the one-person touring exhibition *Allegory*, hosted by the Crafts Study Centre, UCA Farnham from 2009 to 2010.[34] They examine the human experience of temporality with lived past and present experience as mutually entangled and co-dependent. A related temporal construct of motherhood/daughterhood was also entailed in these works.

Pause (Figure 29) and *Pause II* (Figure 30) use the imagery of Nicholas Poussin's painting *Dance to the Music of Time* (1634–1636).[35] In the painting, four central figures dance in a circle representing the cycle of poverty, labour, wealth and pleasure (Figure 31), equally read as movement through the seasons (with Autumn as labour) or as gradations from dark to light; and furthermore from disenchantment to re---enchantment. The complex iconography in Poussin's allegory is expressed through classical codes: Father Time plays the lyre while a cherub beside him with an hourglass suggests an impending end to the music; Aurora and Apollo ride across the sky, signifying the day's duration; while a statue of Janus gazes forward and back at past and present. *Pause* and *Pause II* re-present aspects of Poussin's imagery, but rather than the relentless passage of time, I depicted a

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34 The show toured four venues, and at the Willis Museum, Basingstoke, it was the inaugural contemporary exhibition. These pieces were documented in the accompanying catalogue *Alice Kettle: Allegory* (Olding, S. 2009). *Pause* has been reproduced in: Schoeser, M. (ed.) (2012) *Textiles: The Art of Mankind.* London: Thames and Hudson; and Kettle, A. & McKeating, J. (2010) *Machine Stitch Perspectives*. London: A & C Black.

Pause was selected by the World Crafts Council for the European Applied Arts Prize (2009), which has accompanying catalogue. It was also exhibited in *A Pause in the Rhythm of Time* (2009) at the Belger Arts Centre, Kansas City, as part of the 'Off the Grid' Surface Design Conference 2009. Reviews of *Allegory* were published in *Selvedge Magazine*, *Embroidery*, and 'Scratching the Surface' in *Crafts* Magazine. Also, 'Dancing to the Music of Time', *Crafts* Magazine, March/April 2010, p. 54; and *Figaro* newspaper and magazine, 9th February 2014.

35 Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665) Dance to the Music of Time c 1634–c 1636, http://wallacelive.wallacecollection.org/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=65042 (Accessed on 21st July 2015).

Figure 29
Alice Kettle
Pause – Publication 4
2009
280 x 185 cm
Thread and fabric stitched on canvas
Photo: Joe Low

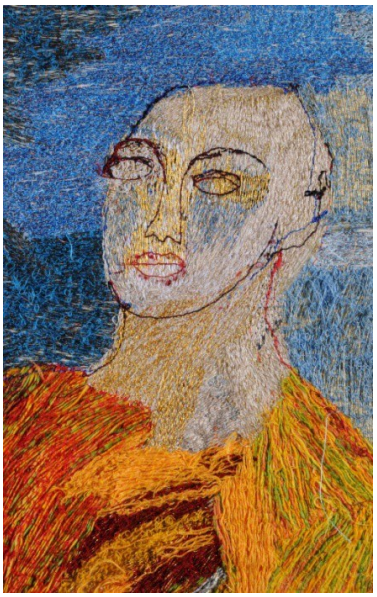

Figure 30
Alice Kettle
Pause II – Publication 4
2009
385 x 185 cm Thread
and fabric stitched on canvas
Photo: Joe Low

Figure 31 Nicholas Poussin (1594–1665) *Dance to the Music of Time* c. 1634–1636
104 x 82.5 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection: The Wallace Collection, London.

holding point, a pausing, with a place for enchantment to occur within the temporal revolution. Allegorical images are said to freeze time as they focus attention on enduring universal truths. I applied the allegorical to the covert personal and gendered narrative within cyclical time.

Time

> A Klee drawing named 'Angelus Novus' shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating … Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe that keeps piling ruin upon ruin … The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed … The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned … while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.
>
> Walter Benjamin, *Ninth Thesis on the Philosophy of History* (2003[1940]392)[36]

Benjamin's melancholic description of Klee's *Angel* (Figure 32) sees us trapped in the catastrophe of personal and political histories; Benjamin sees the Angel transfixed by the chaos of the past. *Pause* and *Pause II* seek escape from this entrapmentin the haunting presence of the past, through re---enchantmentof the future.

Theoretical discourse around time offers several viewpoints. Isaac Newton propounded linear time which 'flows uniformly' as an 'order of succession' (Newton, 2004[1687]: 66). He asserted that 'all motions can be accelerated and retarded, but the flow of absolute time cannot be changed' (Newton, 2004[1687]: 66). This absolute flow takes its place in my work symbolically through the pulse of the sewing machine but not as unremitting mechanical production.[37] The machine

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36 See Appendix for full quotation. Walter Benjamin owned this print by Paul Klee, made in 1920, now in the collection of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

37 This can be viewed alongside Walter Benjamin's text *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* which discusses how objects are reproducible through technology which alters the aesthetic experience for the viewer of artwork, and the authentic nature of it as a unique object. This links with Benjamin's concept of aura. *Art in modern culture: an anthology of critical texts* (ed. Francis Franscina and Jonathan Harris) Open University (1994), pp. 297–307.

literally mediates the work but the imagery looks towards other concepts of time. Immanuel Kant rejected Newtonian time, proposing that time does not exist independently of our perceptions and experiences; it is constituted subjectively (1781[1787]). In this Kantian vision, *Pause* and *Pause II* can be connected by the experience of each other, where one can be seen as past and one present with the movement between the two works transformed by the viewpoint of the perceiver.

Klee's *Angel*, described by Chrostowska, is mesmerised by what he sees, evoking 'time's balancing act; as past and future hang in the balance' (2012:43). For Benjamin and Chrostowska, Klee's *Angel* is suspended in time. It is that suspension I looked for in *Pause and Pause II,* where the pause is held by the density of physical presence in the work as a kind of stillness. The exchange of time between these works acts to generate an equilibrium drawing the experience into the realm of enchantment. In *Pause II*, the figure of an Angel is Father Time who waits in paused time (Figure 33). Like Klee's *Angelus Novus* he looks back, his burden is less weighty but he reminds us of the opportunity to transform time as a continuous passage of movement back and forward where enchantment becomes the motion of exchange and revolution of past into present.

Motherland

Pause and *Pause II* are ostensibly variations on the theme of Poussin's *Dance*. For me, they hold personal significance as a representation of my mother and three daughters dancing: the inherited transmission through generations as a mirror of the cyclical nature of the past. Jung describes the territory of motherland where, 'Every woman extends backwards into her mother and forwards into her daughter' (Jung, cited in Hirsch, 1981:209). Jung goes on to describe the trans---generational

experience as a prolongation with 'peculiar uncertainty as regards time; a woman lives earlier as a mother, later as a daughter' (Jung and Kerenyi, 1969:162).[38]

The symmetry of mother/daughter is 'part of the unity of symbolic order', which Hirsch views as an entrapment for women. Hirsch uses the philosopher Julia Kristeva's term of 'in process' (Kristeva, cited in Hirsch, 1981:210) to describe the plurality and continuity of being that the connected mother/daughter relationship can engender. This allows the past to be fluid and constantly exchanged. Much discourse surrounds the relationship of mother and daughter, ranging from the psychoanalytical to the mythological. *Pause* and *Pause II* explores the inter---penetrability of generations by incorporating thread and patches of fabric from dresses stitched by my mother, worn and handed on. It is not clear which work represents which generation, they are interchangeable as 'the face and form never definitely finished, always still to be moulded' that Luce Irigaray describes, revealing in that hesitant uncertainty how the intergenerational being is linked with enchantment (1980 [1977]).

38 Referenced from Hirsch (1981:209).

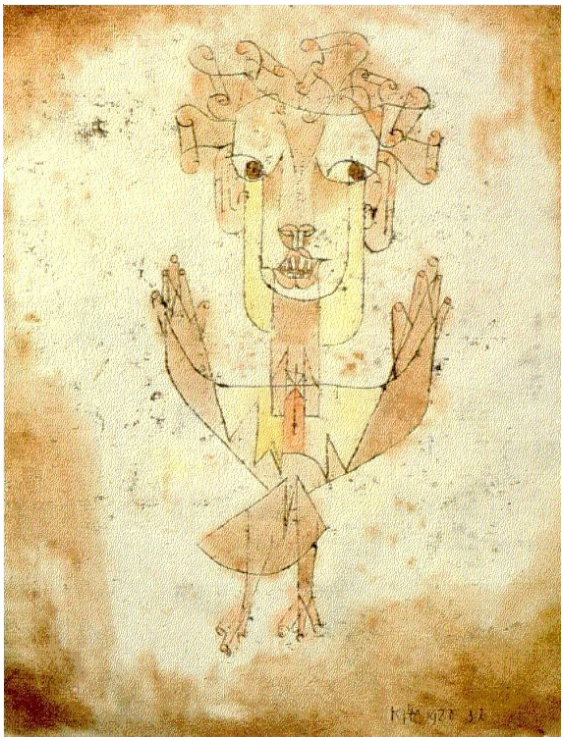

Figure 32
Paul Klee (1879–1940)
Angelus Novus
1920
Mono print or oil transfer
Collection: Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

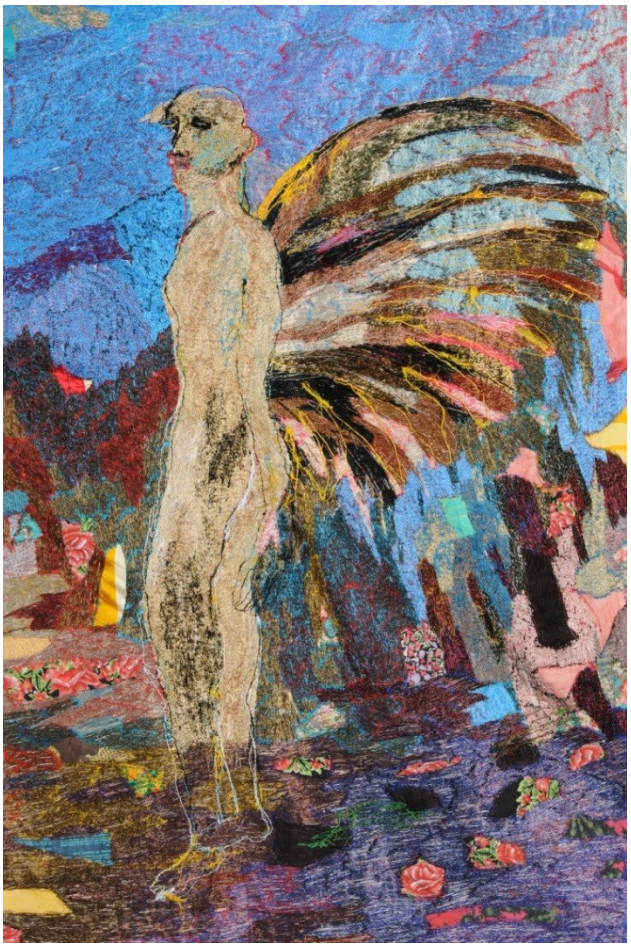

Figure 33
Alice Kettle
Pause II – Publication 4
2009
385 x 185 cm Thread
and fabric stitched on canvas
Photo: Joe Low

4.5 *Alice Kyteler* (2010)

> In the marketplace they are piling the dry sticks.
> A thicket of shadows is a poor coat. I inhabit
> The wax image of myself, a doll's body.
> Sickness begins here: I am a dartboard for witches.
> Only the devil can eat the devil out.
> In the months of red leaves I climb to a bed of fire.
>
> From 'Witch Burning' by Sylvia Plath (2002[1981])

Alice Kyteler (Figure 34) is the name of the key artwork I contributed to the two---person exhibition, *The Narrative Line*, held at the National Craft Gallery of Ireland (2010–2011).[39]

The work *Alice Kyteler* examined through portraiture issues related to female power and powerlessness. The real---life condemned medieval witch Alice Kyteler was depicted in this work as an alter ego, a fellow being who, through stitch, might reclaim feminine power. Through portraying myself, I portrayed my double, as a divided self. Ralph Metzner refers to the multiple associations in mythic and symbolic lore of integrating oppositional consciousness (1980:55). Metzner describes the dark self as an omnipresent shadow of ordinary consciousness, 'conditioned along polarised opposites of male and female, expressive and receptive, dynamic and magnetic…separated and divided from each other…'(1980:55). *Alice Kyteler* deals with the psychological doubts and torments engendered through the feminine being in self---conflict and also in a combative or oppressive environment.

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[39] *The Narrative Line*, curated by the National Craft Gallery, Kilkenny, Ireland (2010 –2011), with subsequent tour of four venues in Ireland and Northern Ireland. The exhibition was documented in an associated monograph, *The Narrative Line* (2010), published by the Crafts Council of Ireland. *Alice Kyteler* was selected for the Kaunas Biennale *Rewind---Play---Forward* in Lithuania (2011), whose theme was identity and personal histories.

Alice Kettle
Alice Kyteler – Publication 5
2010
172 x 182 cm Thread,
found objects, wood on canvas
Photo: Rebecca Peters

As in Plath's poem, this work sought a transformative solution to real-life destructive encounters to offer the regenerative possibility of re-enchanting the disenchanted as a form of '*mythos* of coming to terms with our animal nature' to become whole (Metzner, 1980: 56). Sylvia Plath references the witch's punishment to describe her disillusionment with the domestic role of women, but ultimately for Plath burning provides a means of transformation.

My name, Alice Kettle, is a rendering in English of the Gaelic Alice Kyteler, thus on one level a blending of personal histories occurs with the simple acknowledgement of my namesake. Known from documentary evidence, the trial of Alice Kyteler has parallels with my own trials, allowing an autobiographical relationship to be represented in thread. Society's usual view of witchcraft is seen here as a misconception of feminine power; the work views witchcraft as a process of transmutation, and stitch as a force able to effect similar alchemical types of material and personal transformation.

The medieval Alice Kyteler was born in 1280 at Kyteler's House, a site close to the National Craft Gallery in Kilkenny, where *The Narrative Line* exhibition opened on Hallowe'en 2010. A wealthy Anglo---Norman noblewoman, Kyteler married four times, acquiring influence and status. In 1324 she was accused of witchcraft and her trial was amongst the first in Europe following Pope John XXII's listing of witchcraft as heresy.[40] The historian Bernadette Williams sees Kyteler's indictment stemming from 'confrontation between secular and ecclesiastical authority' (1994: online). She was faced with seven charges amongst which are sleeping with an incubus, and invoking a demon called the son of Art by cutting up and scattering animal parts.

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40 Pope John XXII listed witchcraft as a heresy in *Super illius specula*. Kyteler's was one of the first European witchcraft trials and followed closely on the election of this pope (1316–1334). https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alice_Kyteler (Accessed on 20th July 2015).

Figure 35
Alice Kettle
Alice Kyteler (detail) – Publication 5
2010
172 x 182 cm Thread,
found objects, wood on canvas
Photo: Rebecca Peters

Kyteler's increasing status was probably causal in her condemnation. Ultimately, Kyteler was condemned to execution by burning... a fate from which she escaped.[41] Beyond the circumstance of our names, I built a strong co---feeling with Kyteler, seeing in her everyday life common elements to my own. Kyteler's cutting became the cropping of fabric as a transformative action engendering magical power. In becoming my namesake through her depiction, I took on the guise of a witch, clothing myself in garments of magical protection embroidered with spells and charms in recognition of the obverse nature of the animal self. There is extensive radical feminist discourse surrounding the rehabilitation of the feminine; Diane Purkiss' evaluation of the feminist rewritings of the 1970s is valuable for showing how the witch was remodeled as a woman of beauty and power (1996:13).

Alice Kyteler subverts the assumptions around the disparaging of women expressed by the patriarchal perjorative 'witch'. She wears a dress made of embroidered tags, brushes and small objects attached to her skirt (Figure 35) referencing the fictional magic of transformative robes: 'the talismanic garments which form a group of magical instruments' (Warner, 2014). In the background are the naked husbands, who as Emperors wearing their 'new clothes', are made foolish by their own inflated centrality (Christian Andersen, 2015[1837]).

Warner describes magical corsets with wishes stitched into them and Ottoman princes whose cloaks could conjure them elsewhere (Warner 2014). However, it is from the tradition of the Tudor portrait with its symbolic garments that *Alice Kyteler* draws visual reference, with Kyteler modelled on portraits of the Virgin Queen. In the portraits of Elizabeth I, such as the Ditchling portrait (1592)[42] (Figure 36), in which she wears decorative robes loaded with iconographic motifs: from

[41] However, her servant girl was burned in her place.

representations of power such as globes and swords, to representations of purity such as moons and pearls. Roszika Parker describes the encoding of embroidery on dress 'as a mark of social power', perceived as ostentatious vanity (Parker, 2012:42). The *Alice Kyteler* gown has golden embroidered charms and devotional medals that allude to the magic induced by stitching. Stitching is viewed in the guise of witchcraft magic that can give access to re---enchantment. Warner reminds us of its 'transfiguring effects of imaginary possibilities', aligning this capacity with 'the prophetic ability to imagine what has not yet come to be': to change and self---creation (Warner, 2012:433).

Sylvia Plath followed a path of self---destruction as a consequence of her demons. She struggled with social oppression as a creative woman relentlessly pushed toward domesticity. My own experience has led me toward the metamorphic power of women's work to free the imagination where stitch enables the potential to enter a generative space. In *Alice Kyteler* enchantment is layered, it draws upon magic as feminine power to create a validating self---image which celebrates the transgressive other self through stitch.

Figure 36 Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger (1561–1636) *Queen Elizabeth I* ('The Ditchley portrait') c. 1592
241 x 152 cm
Oil on canvas
Bequeathed by Harold Lee---Dillon, 17th Viscount Dillon, 1932
NPG 2561
Collection: The National Portrait Gallery, London.

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[42] *Queen Elizabeth I* ('The Ditchley portrait') by Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger c 1592 The National Portrait Gallery. http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw02079/Queen---Elizabeth---I---The---Ditchley---portrait (Accessed on 20th July 2015).

4.6 *The Garden of England* (2012)

The Garden of England [43] was an installation at the Queen's House, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.[44] In 2009, I was approached by Amy Miller, a newly appointed curator who was keen to reinvigorate the house with contemporary art, to reverse the decline in visitor numbers. Because of the nature of the historical venue, limitations of materials and sites for installation restricted the brief, which at a very late stage focused on the early history of the house as a garden retreat, using portraits from the collections as a starting point. Three works were conceived for the project: *Flower Helix* (2012), *Flower Bed* (2012) and *Henrietta Maria* (2012). Extreme pressure on time was resolved through public engagement in the making of *Flower Helix*.

These works were envisaged as a linked group, commenting on the feminine in the intertwining of social status with sexual nature. The improvisatory nature of stitch as a fertile medium parallels the changeable nature of a garden and the expectation of women to procreate. The works concern the constrained roles of women in the royal court to entertain and reproduce but with this underlying social narrative viewed from its emotional, intimate and sensual manifestations. Thus, textiles reminds us of the Queen's House as a place of revelry, with queens at play in their privileged garden retreat. The *Garden of England* not only used the enchanted imaginary in its creation, but sought to allow enchantment discovered by others through a connection with the site and its past.

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[43] The installation was documented in an exhibition leaflet published by the Museum. Research for this project was presented in a chapter 'Stitch in Time' by Alice Kettle and Jane Webb published in Barber, C. & Macbeth, P. (eds) (2014) *Outside: Activating Cloth to Enhance the Way we Live.* Cambridge,Cambridge Scholars Publishing(ISBN---13: 978---1443856959). Theexhibitionwasreviewed in *Crafts* Magazine, July/August 2013, *Embroidery*, May/June 2013, and online: http://onestoparts.com/review---the---garden---of---england---queens---house---greenwich , aswellasbythe Museum's Youth Advisory Group: http://nmmyouthadvisorygroup.blogspot.co.uk/.

[44] http://www.rmg.co.uk/queens---house/ (Accessed on 17th May 2015).

The Queen's House is the architectural jewel of Inigo Jones[45] (Figure 37) conceived as a garden pavilion for Queen Anne of Denmark in 1616[46] and completed by Queen Henrietta Maria in 1635 to serve as a place of parties and masquery; a queendom for royal women in a world of men.[47] Today as a quiet museum of nautical paintings, emptied of its vibrant past, the feminine presence is absent and its enchantedness is dissipated. Through *The Garden of England*, I aimed to evoke a former playfulness facilitated by the feminine view.

In his essay, 'Des Espaces Autres' (Of Other Spaces) (1967), Michel Foucault defined *heterotopia* as: a counter-space that is a 'simultaneously real and mythic contestation of the space in which we live' (1984 [1967:4]). It is a space by which we are 'drawn outside ourselves' and 'the erosion of our life' (Nakaue, 2008). Heterotopias function in different ways but in accord with Foucault they are places where contradictory kinds of space converge. The Queen's House can be viewed within these precepts; alongside the examples of fairgrounds and prisons, Foucault describes the 'space of illusion' or brothel – a place for hidden pleasures (Foucault, 1984:8). *The Garden of England*, with its sensual embroidered flowers, ornamental seed---pods and phallic flower heads, returns the Queen's House to adult play by inviting the viewer to experience it as a space where the powerful met as women and men. The garden space, a special space marked off from the everyday, is one of Foucault's heterotopias.

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45 Inigo Jones (1573–1652)
46 Anne of Denmark (1574–1619)
47 Henrietta Maria of France (1609–1669)

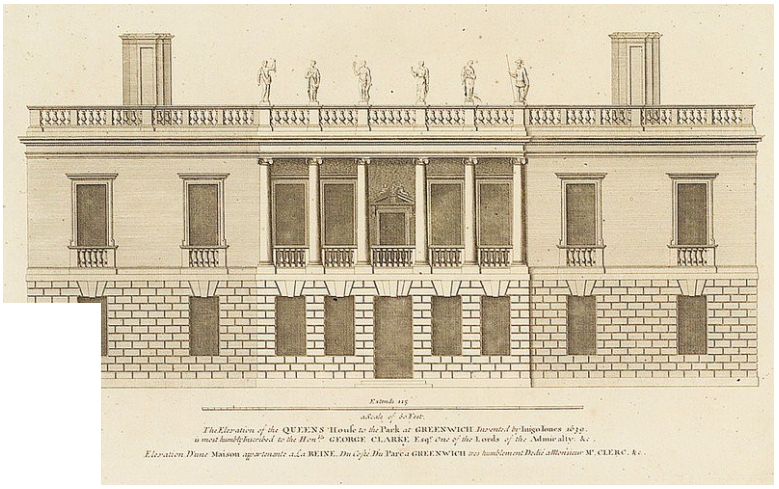

Figure 37
The Queens' House, Greenwich
Inigo Jones (1573–1672)
1639

Figure 38
Alice Kettle
The Garden of England – Publication 6
Flower Helix
2012
150 cm circumference x 1200 cm,
Threads, wire, beads.
The Queen's House
The National Maritime Museum Greenwich,
London
Photo: the National Maritime Museum

The related installations in the Queen's House were sites designed to allow deviation, disrupted temporality, reflecting the imaginary possibilities of its former life and bringing past and present into conjunction. Foucault draws attention to the mirror as a heterotopia, a 'placeless place' where what is seen 'in the glass both [is] utterly real, connected with the entire space surrounding it, and utterly unreal...' (Foucault, 1984:4). Peter Johnson, discussing the geography of heterotopia, cited this as 'exploring the spatial metaphors of imagination, or the poetics of intimate space 'laden with qualities' and haunted by fantasies' (Foucault, cited in Johnson, 2012:8). It is in this way that the installation accesses the enchanted view, acting as a talisman for the viewer to move between real and fantasy, present and past while immersed in the intimacy of the setting.

A selection of portraits of queens and courtiers were chosen by the curators to surround my work. There was no chronological, religious or political union to this courtly portrait gallery, but rather it emphasised the portrayal of textiles to create a court defined by ornate cloth and embroidery. Courtiers were judged by what they wore, sartorial gestures in intricate stitch, braids twisted and coiled, cloth layered and slashed. In these works textiles appear as the propaganda of nationhood and gender– the binding of social imperatives. The public space became a site of intimacy and emotion within this new arrangement, and the portraits seemed to acquire qualities of longing and desire.

I re---imagined these aristocratic lives as profoundly human, cognisant of duty to perpetuate the royal lineage. A twelve---metre---high *Helix* (Figure 38) as twisted chromosome acknowledged the site as one of sexual encounter which as a

Figure 39
Alice Kettle
The Garden of England – Publication 6
Flower Bed (detail)
2012
160 x 230 cm Thread
and print on canvas, rope, paper, lace.
The Queen's House
The National Maritime Museum Greenwich, London.
Photo: the National Maritime Museum.

deconstructed 'Queen Anne's lace' flower[48] was made up from thousands of stitched motifs contributed by the public as collective and individual acts of making. The ornamental *Flower Bed* assembled motifs translated from the portraits (Figures 39 and 40) and scattered together to germinate. As with Foucault 'the garden [is] in a rug onto which the world comes to enact its symbolic perfection, and the rug is a sort of garden that can move across space' (Foucault, 1984:6). Functioning as a flowering of fertility in the form of a marital bed and placed as a carpet on the floor, this *Flower Bed* was playful and parodic with golden rosettes and thread garlands bordered by ruffs and cuffs.

The third work was a portrait of *Queen Henrietta Maria* (Figure 41). Based on the Van Dyck portrait of her profile, in my version Henrietta Maria's gaze shifts into the room as she catches our sight. Jean---Paul Sartre speaks of the loss of autonomy in the captured gaze, and the awareness of the self felt through the gaze of another (2003). It is with the female gaze that Henrietta Maria looks knowingly at the *Flower Bed* and at us as she views the paradoxes of her world (Pollock, 2003). Her eyes were cut from stitched cloth and re-sewn to view the real world with textile vision. It is through this device that Henrietta Maria becomes myself, connecting with my embodied experience of the world understood through thread. Seeing allows a reciprocal sensation of being where identity emerges from within, as a sensation of her body.

The Garden of England confronts us with the feminine perspective, with queens in their womanly state, their ability to be transgressive in a dynamic heterotopic 'jouissance' (Voela, 2011:172). Foucault's notion of heterotopic space, a 'simultaneously real and mythic contestation of the space in which we live' as cited

[48] Queen Anne's lace is the North American name for the plant Wild Carrot or *Daucus carota*.

Figure 40
Alice Kettle
The Garden of England – Publication 6
Flower Bed and *Portrait of Henrietta Maria*
2012
160 x 230 cm Thread
and print on canvas, rope, paper, lace.
The Queen's House
The National Maritime Museum Greenwich, London
Photo: the National Maritime Museum

Figure 41
Alice Kettle
The Garden of England – Publication 6
Portrait of Henrietta Maria
2012
120 x 160cm,
Thread and print on canvas. The Queen's House
The National Maritime Museum Greenwich, London
Photo: the National Maritime Museum

above, aligns with our concept of the enchanted space as a site in between the real and the imaginary (1984). Enchantment in this case is a purposeful tool used to reanimate a space from the past, creating a bridge to the present, as a deliberate act so as to give entry to a heterotopic site.

4.7 *Loss* (2011)

Paradise Lost (2010) and *Homage to Guernica* (2011) were the key artworks made forthetwo---person exhibition *Loss* shownat Chichester Cathedral in 2011.[49]

The themes of loss and its commemoration reflect the contemporary human impact of wars and terrorist events and natural disaster. Personal loss was represented in previous works but in *Paradise Lost* (2010) and *Homage to Guernica* (2011), I reflect on the broader narratives of irretrievable destruction, drawing from Picasso's monumental war commentary *Guernic*a[50] (Figure 42) as model and Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost* as inspiration, while seeking a redemptive response to specific contemporary events.[51] In these artworks the feminine and autobiographical aspects were shifted away from the ostensible subject into the inherent process and materiality.

Picasso's *Guernica* (1937) was made in response to the bombing of the village of Guernica by foreign planes during the Spanish Civil War. The painting is characterised by faces distorted in agony and dismembered bodies, described by Campbell---Johnston'asthenightmarefromwhichwecannotawake'(2004:15).

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[49] *Loss* was a two---person exhibition with Jules Findley. The exhibition was documented in the accompanying publication *Loss* (2011) by Jules Findley and Alice Kettle, with a commissioned essay by Jeremy Theophilus. *Paradise Lost* was selected for the European Applied Arts Prize 2012 and was part of the *Lost Certainty* exhibition (2011) at Contemporary Applied Arts, London with Claire Curneen. *Homage to Guernica* was exhibited in *62@50* in the Holden Gallery, MMU (2012); and *Fourteen: The Artists' Response*, Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre, Cwbran, Wales (26 July–20 September 2014).

[50] *Guernica* (3.5 m x 7.8 m) made in 1937 by Pablo Picasso. The painting is held in the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.

[51] *Paradise Lost*, John Milton (1608–1674). The first version was published in 1667 and a second edition was produced in 1674.

Figure 42 Pablo
Picasso (1881–1973)
Guernica
1937
780 x 350 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection of Museo Nacional
Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.

Figure 43 Alice
Kettle
Loss – Publication 7
Homage to Guernica
2011
600 x 155 cm
Thread on canvas
Photo : Mary Stark

Figure 44 (detail)
Alice Kettle
Loss – Publication 7
Homage to Guernica
2011
600 x 155 cm
Thread on canvas
Photo : Mary Stark

Toni del Renzio's perceptive interpretation suggesting: 'Art not only kills the dead but may … also breathe life back' (2008:7) (Figure 43).

The work responded to the ten---year anniversary of the war in Afghanistan with its atrocities affecting soldiers and civilians alike. Amidst the propagandising of war as a polarisation of East and West, *Homage to Guernica* avoided the political gesturing to focus on the human tragedy with its experience of terror and the fragmentation of ethnic and religious groups. Taking on the starkness of *Guernica*, with Picasso's palette of bleak photo---documentary---like monochrome, my work levers the treatment from a landscape into an upright elevation to suggest that 'loss has an inherent revelatory element, unveiling the unseen' (Theophilus, 2011:4). In raising the work erect it becomes like a tower or Biblical Babel 'with its top in the heavens'[52] and bottom edge earthbound by dark colour (Figure 44). Towers act as symbols of hierarchical power and conversely powerlessness, as in the tower of Babel, confusion.[53] In fairy tales, the interior of the tower is a feminine domain, a place of entrapment, nevertheless one where woman can exercise her powers of overview.

Paradise Lost (Figure 45) develops the theme of distant view: the loss of one world view that entailed a shift to a new perspective as a response to the Japanese *tsunami* and nuclear catastrophe (2011). The background of the stitched piece is taken from Piero della Francesca's *Nativity*,[54] the Christian moment of salvation in the birth of Christ which is transferred to a zone of apocalyptic damage.

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[52] Genesis 11:1–9, verse 4.

[53] The origin of the word 'Babel' (Heb *bābel*), can be interpreted as gateway but also as confusion or confounding(Heb *bālal*) http://global.oup.com/obso/focus/focus_on_towerbabel/(Accessed on 27th July 2015) .

[54] Piero della Francesca, *The Nativity* (1470). http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/piero---della---francesca---the---nativity (Accessed on 25th July 2015).

Figure 46
Alice Kettle
Loss – Publication 7
Paradise Lost
2011
260 x 230 cm
Thread on blanket.
Photo: Joe Low

Figure 45
Piero della Francesca (1415–1492)
The Nativity
1470
124.4 x 122.6 cm
Oil on poplar
NG908
Collection: The National Gallery, London.

Children appear mutilated and the woman is stripped bare while the angel looking over its shoulder acts as a guide through disaster (Figures 46 and 47). Stitched on a blanket, the work itself offers refuge in this protective symbol of comfort for homeless refugees.

Paradise Lost, as in Milton's text, sees that social order can be re---formed even after corruptive dismembering; out of hopelessness, re---envisioned structures and future possibilities of belonging emerge. The Biblical narrative proceeds through disobedience, repentance and forgiveness. But here, I evoked Ernst Bloch's notion of the 'Not---Yet---Conscious, Not---Yet---Become', the utopian view of the individual as animated by aspirations of a better life; a 'forward dreaming' (Bloch, no date: online) that looks towards new political and social systems. *Paradise Lost* seeks to offer hope not as a dream, but as what is inherent in the present as transformational potential.

Looking back on these works, I can see that I attempted to create sites of enchantment that could offer refuge, mediating movement away from destruction. O'Connor points to Michel Serres' concept of milieu, where 'Mediators are not static betweennesses; rather, they are go-betweens, in movement' (O'Connor, 2005:321). The enchanted space is an active site where the work of change can take place. The works reference a utopian search for hope, shunning the hopelessness that is a consequence of modernist ideologies. Neither work memorialises a specific moment of catastrophe, rather acknowledging that disaster is omnipresent and suggesting pathways to renewal.[55] The works discussed in *Loss* concede the dark side of humanity and nature, but seek to avoid the dualities of

[55] Bettleheim, looking at the uses of enchantment in fairy tales, contends that, 'The dominant culture wishes to pretend ... that the dark side of man does not exist and professes a belief in an optimistic meliorism' (2010:7).

optimism and pessimism, war and peace, seeing in each the potential for the other. These works are in-between; the 'object was not only what had happened but what was promised', as Theophilus observes and 'passes from the known to the unknown, from presence to absence' (2011:4).

Each of the works in *Loss* signpost renewal, as a collective desire to assemble new futures. Ernst Bloch in his utopian theories points to the generative ideologies. Douglas Kellner explains that for Bloch, 'The past – what has been – contains both the sufferings, tragedies and failures of humanity – what to avoid and to redeem – and its unrealized hopes and potentials – which could have been and can yet be' (Kellner, 1996: online). These works use the cycle of disenchantment and re---enchantment into enchantment with hope fuelled by the search to resolve catastrophe. Thread is the narrator of this story of hope, providing comfort in the blanket, softening the landscape of destruction, and signalling the maternal power of rebirth.

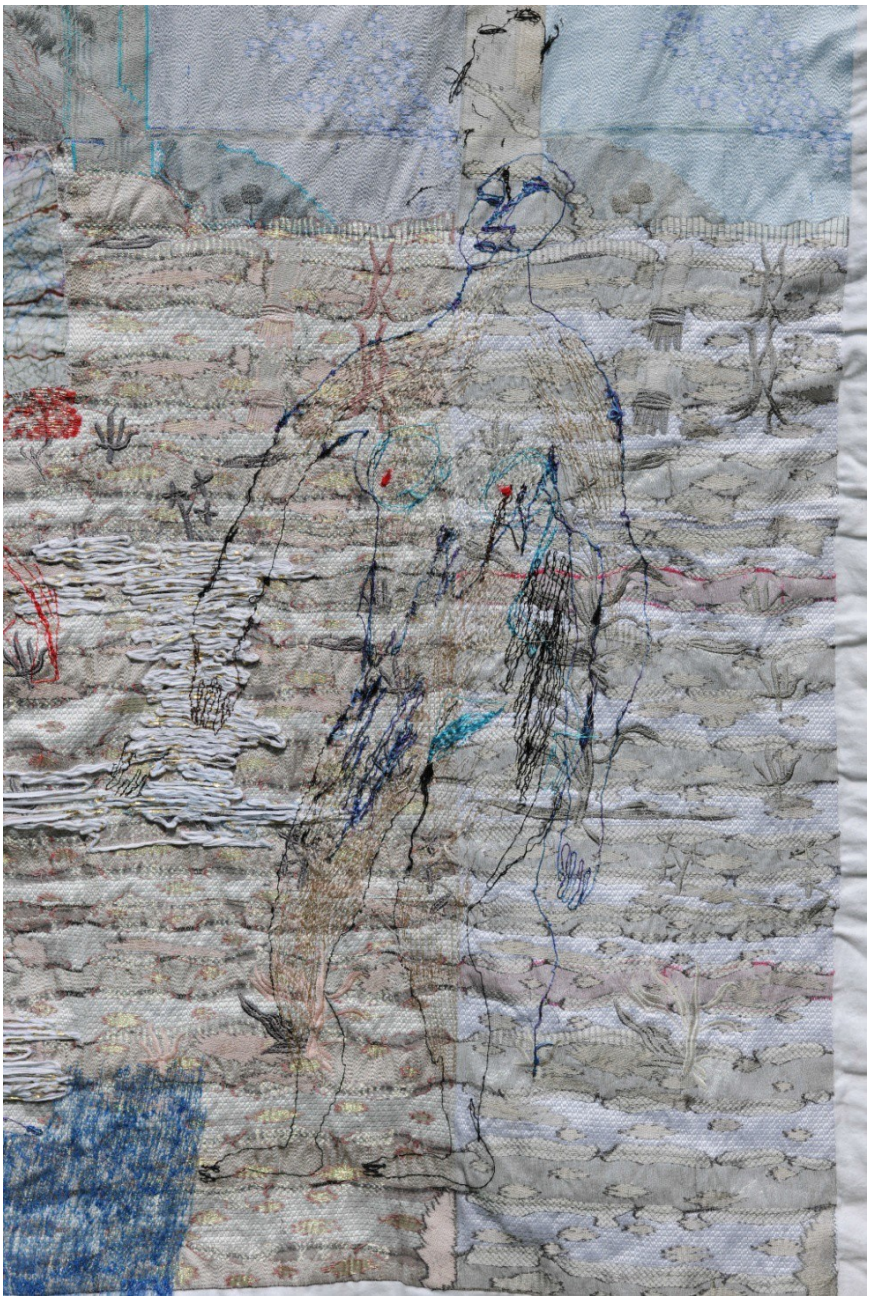

Figure 47 Alice
Kettle
Loss – Publication 7
Paradise Lost (detail)
2011
260 x 230 cm
Thread on blanket.
Photo: Joe Low

4.8 Golden Dawn (2014)

Golden Dawn, a single monumental work (Figure 48) was exhibited in 2014 at *Collect* in the Saatchi Gallery, and in *Craft Now* at the Shipley Art Gallery, where it was subsequently acquired for the permanent collection.[56] The work reimagines the moment of expulsion of the neo---fascist Golden Dawn party from the Greek government in 2013, a subject which held resonances for me beyond the surface narrative.[57] I saw in this moment the potential for a new understanding of the myth of Ariadne and this allowed me to layer an autobiographical meaning alongside the political meaning, drawing upon the symbolic and indexical element of gold thread. As Manuel Lisboa found with Paula Rego's work, 'national politics finds expression through the familiar lexicon of interpersonal relations', but conversely the personal meaning can find representation through wider imagery (Lisboa, 2003:2). In *Golden Dawn,* far right politics is seen through the discourse of insider/outsider, and the feminine outlook is articulated within the pictorial narrative using golden thread to confront conflict in 'decorative terms' (Greer, cited in Lisboa, 2003:3).[58]

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56 *Craft Now* (31 May 2014–7 February 2015) is a group exhibition of craft works acquired for the Shipley Art Gallery collection that represent important influences over the previous ten years. A link is made with *Three Caryatids* (1988–1989) in theme and through their acquisition into the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester in 1991.

57 The Golden Dawn (Χρυσή Αυγή, *Chrysí Avgí*) is the farl right neol Nazi political party in Greece founded in 1980 by Nikolaos Michaloliakos. The party is regarded as openly nationalist, racist, xenophobic and heterosexist. Golden Dawn registered as a political party in 1993 to promote the expansion of Greek territory into southern Albania (Northern Epirus), the Republic of Macedonia, and southern Bulgaria, and western Anatolia. This included the expulsion of Bulgarian and Turkish minorities in northern Greece. The Greek Volunteer Guard, which was made up of Golden Dawn members, helped capture Srebrenica where war crimes were committed against Bosnian Muslims in 1995. In 2003 onwards, Golden Dawn focused on opposing nonl European immigration into southern Greece. In 2012 Golden Dawn won seats for the first time in the Hellenic Parliament. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_Dawn_(political_party) (Accessed on 29th July 2015).

58 The tapestry work of the Norwegian artist Hannah Ryggen (1894–1970) was influenced by political and social struggle. Steffen Wesselvold Holden describes how her work sits outside the art historical canon since textiles was viewed a merely a decorative medium.

Figure 48
Alice Kettle
Golden Dawn – Publication 8
2014
350 x 162 cm Thread
and print on canvas
Photo: Alice Kettle
Collection: Shipley Museum and Art Gallery.

The organisation Golden Dawn was formed in 1980 and registered as a political party in 1993. From 2003, the party built its reputation on its anti---immigration response to growing pressures on the economy. Its leader Nikolaos Michaloliakos and other members were arrested in 2013 following the murder of the anti---fascist rapper Pavlos Fyssas. The incident depicts Michaloliakos, the promoter of exclusionist policies, at the moment of his own exclusion. While a type of triumph, it provokes ripples of thought on the nature of cultural identity that held personal meaning with the loss of my Greek identity through divorce. *Golden Dawn* may be seen as a sequel to the *Odyssey series*, returning to my Greek narrative this time through the enchanted imaginary. By using stitch, I sought to re---enter what had occurred as insider and outsider, no longer as archetypal patient Penelope, but as active Ariadne.

In *Golden Dawn*, there are marching figures holding aloft fiery torches with Michaloliakos in the form of the mythical tamed Minotaur (Figure 49) conveying a sense of 'participating in a living allegory whose tap---root runs down deep in classical … literature' (Warner, 1987:xix). The piece shifts the incident into a space where figures can be seen as storied, standing in fields of pattern emphasised by gold colours. This is not 'the world as it is, it does not describe the outer world, but the inner processes taking place in the individual' (Bettleheim, 2010:25).

Michaloliakos is the monster, pacified through an enchanted presence — a presence visually and metaphorically evoked by gold. Gold, with its magical usefulness and apotropaic qualities, conjures a personal dawn of new beginnings where thread is the starting point of change.[59]

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59 https://finds.org.uk/staffshoardsymposium/papers/charlottebehr (Accessed on 23rd July 2015)

The depiction draws upon the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur (from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*), revealing Ariadne's ability to confound male brutality through feminine devices. In *Golden Dawn* the figure of Ariadne cannot be seen in figural form; she is implicated in the action through her embodiment in golden thread signifying both her power to rescue and powerlessness in abandonment. As insider and outsider, she is knotted into the intricacies of daughter/lover/interrogator of familial and marital relations with golden thread symbolic of unravelling and tension. This tensile filament seems to tug at my own Greekness whilst watching its present predicament as an outsider.

Theseus escaping the labyrinth through Ariadne's gift of thread offers rich metaphorical resonance. In mathematics, Ariadne's thread is the solving of a problem by tracing all possible routes when deductive methods fail. The labyrinth is a complex construct where lurking 'evil is omnipresent'[60] (Willing, cited in Bradley, 1997:34), and it cannot be navigated by logic, but only through tracing convoluted linear pathways. The thread is a means to wayfare into the world as well as to rep trace journeys. It is a metaphor for thoughts leading into another world, which Kathryn Sullivan Kruger says, 'unfolds and … returns [us] … to the world of light and possibility, forever transformed' (2008:14). Thread is viewed by anthropologist ClaudeLevi---Straussasthedialecticmovementbetweeninnerandouterpictorial zones operating as path of entry and withdrawal (Strauss, 1979). This path mediates where art extends into the world and where myth and experience become enmeshed.

60 Victor Willing talking about Paula Rego's work.

Figure 49
Alice Kettle
Golden Dawn (detail) – Publication 8
2014
350 x 162 cm Thread
and print on canvas
Photo: Alice Kettle
Collection: Shipley Museum and Art Gallery.

The broader currency of political manoeuvring and national disintegration as an inner personal conflict is suggested by Ariadne's plight as rescuer---become---forsaken lover. Ariadne sleeps at a moment of crisis and is consequently abandoned by Theseus. Ariadne's agency comes through her thread and when as a woman she sleeps it appears that her power recedes. Ariadne's thread is a means to effect transformation, and sleep (or the dream state) is a place in which this can occur. Reading my personal narrative in Ariadnean terms, thread has been my only effective means, with its talismanic creative, life---giving properties, to re---trace tracks and resolve difficulties.[61] Thread binds personal uncertainties to the archetypal, twisting together the paradoxical connections and finding resolution through story, the actual re---encountered through the mythical in a cycle of enchantment.[62]

Golden Dawn was followed by a further linked work responsive to the developing Greek economic crisis through 2014/15. Titled *The Dog Loukanikos and the Cat's Cradle*,[63] it depicts three naked girls playing cat's cradle with a golden thread. They stand behind the dog Loukanikos who barks at a group of riot police who are constrained by another golden thread [64] (Figures 50 and 51). Amanda Ravetz writes, 'Like the dog of Hades, Loukanikos mediates politics and magic, reproduction and territorialisation, dream and disillusionment' (Ravetz, 2015:43).

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61 Tim Ingold: 'threads and traces appear[ed] … as transforms of one another. Threads have a way of turning into traces, and vice versa … whenever threads turn into traces, surfaces are formed, and whenever traces turn into threads they are dissolved' (Ingold, 2007: 62)

62 Wendy Doniger describes how the experience of the individual becomes an expansive condition which is both diachronic (changing through time) as well as synchronic (transcending the barriers of time). Levil Strauss, C. (1979)

63 Exhibited in 2015 vas.t Scottish Royal Society of Arts as invited artist and *Collect* with Contemporary Applied Arts, Saatchi Gallery London. The work had glass additions made by Kirsteen Aubrey and as an installation included further glasswork and film by Dr Amanda Ravetz. The catalogue is titled *vas:t 2015 visual arts Scotland: transforming*, produced in Edinburgh, by VAS.

64 Loukanikos became a symbol of protest in 2010. This stray dog started to stand with the protestors at the front of anti-austerity protests. His health was affected by tear gas. He died in 2014.

Loukanikos' s voice is one of instinct, which in the modern age is read as 'authentic', rather than the muddled voice of uncertainty and misrepresentation. The golden thread mediates these contrasting conditions, where one paradox is enchanted by the opposite.

These two works suggest a continual tension between cynicism and change. In recognising the potency of Ariadne's thread, *Golden Dawn* and *The Dog Loukanikos* are bolder and angrier than previous works; responding to the posturing of the politics they tie in the recurring patterns of myth with autobiography as echoes of each other. Ravetz describes how the forces within the pieces, 'cannot be wholly tamed or controlled. Kettle intimates something of the dark side of enchantment' (Ravetz, 2015:43). These works, through their strident colour and stylistic mannerisms, respond to the need for new myths for the present day where enchantment offers a way to encounter darker forces. Ariadne has woken from her sleep.

Figures 50 and 51 (detail)
Alice Kettle
The Dog Loukanikos and the Cat's Cradle
2015
520 x 217 cm Thread
and print on canvas
Photo: VAS

5. Conclusion: A space of enchantment

This thesis began by devising a working definition of enchantment based on the literary field with a view to assessing this against the work of visual artists. It set out three strands for investigation that are important in my work and to the enchanted imaginary: narrative, feminine and material aspects of artistic production. To this end I chose to examine the work of five artists in four studies. These female artists were selected on my intuitive sense of a common approach to their work; and because I believed that by examining the nature of this sympathetic relationship, the context of my own artistic vision could be examined.

The work of these artists was found broadly to fit within my working definition of enchantment, although other characters were suggested that may also be part of the visual space of enchantment. Firstly, the making processes of these artists were immersive, even obsessive. They often entailed a repetitive gestural movement which always arises from close physical engagement with materials and their manipulation. Another prominent feature was the recuperative nature of the work, usually proceeding along autobiographical themes, and thus allowing the reworking of the female nature of the self. The use of 'association laden materials and process orientated techniques' described by Frances Morris in relation to the work of Louise Bourgeois, underlines a contingency of the female, artistic vision (Frances Morris, 2003: 13). For three of these artists, textiles and thread are inherent in this working process where the active nature of thread affects a process of transformation. The space of enchantment is the modality that enables this encounter.

Whitney Chadwick remarks how 'enchantment comes naturally' (Chadwick, cited in Aberth, 2010; 33); while Chadwick refers here to Leonora Carrington, such an instinctive quality may be typical of enchantment. By this I mean the sense of entering another space which has a liminal nature; entailing what *might* happen (2010:33). Pennina Barnett calls this liminal space within the folds of fabric as a site of uncertainty, to be encountered or discovered (Barnett, cited by Hemmings, 2012: 186). This is closely linked to the same process of entering narrative works. Further, Marina Warner describes stories as encouraging temporal transgressions and 'thought experiments' (2014: online). The published works presented in this thesis use a visual narrative for 'thread experiments' as a register of the feminine which ties subject and material intimately together. Thus thread carries the agency of feeling and thinking as a female protagonist, the imagination and the narrative voice. The analytical commentary in this thesis demonstrates this engagement with thread in its progression through a body of work which is emancipatory, hopeful and recuperative with the final work *Loukanikos the Dog and the Cat's Cradle* (2015) signaling a new phase of development, perhaps bolder but less optimistic.

The feminine

In *Odyssey* thread itself, through its protective agency (Penelope's tactics of making and unmaking), becomes the narrator of the feminine. Thread plays out the counter themes of the stasis of home against the movements of passage; the Penelopian thread is visible as the vehicle of the narrative description, but remains unseen outside the picture plane, as the female guiding force for the narrator. In *Heads* the construction/re---construction of the female through stitching is more evident. The thread takes on a more active role; the re---making of the self is the story, and the thread is the agent of this internal dialogue of self---encounter. Thread with its recuperative properties holds the fragmented aspects of the female intact. *Alice Kyteler*, conversely, seeks to resolve polarities of the psyche, participating in an alternative mode of enchantment by making use of the magical potency of thread.

This shadowy world of enchantment suggests the darker side of the feminine; the witch who can invoke stitch as a powerful charm. Finally, with *Golden Dawn*, a new vision of thread emerges, no longer the unseen narrator but a full participant in the visual storyline and both allegorical and real.

The narrative

Narrative is time---based but its sequence need not be straight and progressive, since mythical narrative works by means of cyclical structures. In *Looking Forwards to the Past* home was integrated as one place both real and remembered, with the past participating in the present. Thus memory and imagining were linked through re---visioning a city as a means of self---transformation and 'self---remembering' to connect the past with the present (Metzner, 1980: 53). This connecting of temporality was explored more closely through inter---generational time in the *Pause* works. Using allegory as a construct that freezes time, a lived narrative of mothers and daughters formed a female myth that merged personal memory and collective remembering. This connectedness and fusing of successive past and present experience was seen as a continual process of perceiving time as generative, rhythmic and repeated. *The Garden of England,* like the *Pause* artworks used the maternal as regenerative and reproductive. Henrietta Maria's sight represented insight, seen in terms of creative potential as she gazes through eyes made of thread. Her vision is like Irigaray's definition, embodied as female, in this case understood as thread, both of which are fertile. The legacy of the present is seen as the contribution it makes to the lineage through time and this collective past and present cradle the future. The narrative in my work has not been about telling a particular story, but about participating in the universality of myth.

The material

The material and processes in the published works interweave the physical and metaphorical qualities of thread. The rhythm of the machine, through which the thread passes, is like Bourgeois's rocking or the repetition of Rego's and Carrington's painting gestures, part of the strengthening and mending of the self and entering the enchanted mode. In *Heads* the physicality of cutting of fabric and restoration through stitch is resonant of the fragmented psychological state and becoming whole, such cutting/mending also remarked as important to Rego and Bourgeois. *Loss* and *Golden Dawn* shifted the materiality of the works to a more integral position with the feminine and narrative aspects. *Loss* used the physical elevation to a vertical tower form, as a link to the mythical female tower view, the view from inside. In *Golden Dawn* the Ariadnean thread was simultaneously material, narrative participant and representative of the female voice. Thread in *Golden Dawn* is the narrator, a fully formed character in its own right with its material qualities explicit as the golden thread animating the action and pictorial depiction. This Ariadnean view continued in *The Dog Loukanikos and the Cat's Cradle* where thread binds the riot police and explicitly serves to articulate the universal narrative of the cat's cradle.

In the synergies of intermingling themes, that is, the narrative, the female imaginary and material substance, the space of enchantment was found to provide a means to explore new living mythologies. Enchantment is a position of betweenness that allows the artists to 're---member' the past. Stitching reinforces the narrative in the psychic and physical experience of being female as a narrator where 'thread stretches out in a seamless time continuum' (Harrison, 2008: 39).
Liliane Weissberg asserts that it is through thread that women in myth tell stories, marking by its material presence where the feminine story can be deciphered (2010: 666). Thus it is through thread that the experience of feeling female, as passively hidden and actively demanding insight into lived experience, is constantly reinforced and reimagined.

Contribution to Knowledge

The published work evidences stages of development in my encounter with the epic, the autobiographical and the contemporary female perspective. These contribute to a new understanding of enchantment that moves beyond the literary into the artistic context through the use of thread---based medium.
I have suggested reasons why the mode of enchantment is particularly suited to the expression of the female identity within artistic practice and identified characters of working method, autobiographical subject matter and recuperative aspects of the artwork as typical of artists who may be considered as part of a lineage of enchantment.

This research has concentrated on enchantment as a vehicle for the artist, and its personal, autobiographical character. *The Garden of England* began to explore how the viewer might be brought closer to the artist's vision: how to create an enchanted space for the viewer. This is a subject for future research.

With insight into the knowledge of being female a deeper appreciation of the inner self arises, as Robinson writes, 'what could be understood is the brilliance of the soul---mirror – *la psyche*.' (2006:74). Luce Irigaray's writing describes the mirror in a concave form which without symmetry holds accentuated light and alternative viewpoints. The entry of light into Irigaray's concave mirror is dazzling and blinding allowing the reflected view, as in *The Lady and the Unicorn* (p18) tapestry, to come from the mind's eye, free to speculate her own subjectivity.

My monumental textile works are possible to make through entering the space of enchantment. This study demonstrates how thread can create the imaginative space, with particular focus on women, in which to experience inner and outer consciousness as co---dependent and generative. The whole self is constantly made and remade using modalities of enchantment, disenchantment, re---enchantment: ' I Do, I Undo, I Redo.' (Louise Bourgeois, 2000).[65]

[65] Louise Bourgeois
I Do, I Undo, I Redo 2000
Unilever Series at Tate Modern installation and title of exhibition
http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/exhibition/unilever-series-louise-bourgeois-i-do-i-undo-i-redo (accessed 5th October 2015)

6. List of illustrations

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7000 x 50 cm
1070s
Collection: Museum Bayeux.

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Collection: Hardwick Hall
©National Trust
Photo: John Hammondbyshire

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1893–1902
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Silk and gold thread embroidered on linen
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Size unknown

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Alice Kettle
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2003
385 x 185 cm
Thread stitched on canvas
Photo: James Newell

Figure 16
Alice Kettle
Odyssey (detail) – Publication 1
2003
385 x 185 cm
Thread stitched on canvas
Photo: James Newell

Figure 17
Alice Kettle
Odyssey – Hermes and the Lotos---Eaters – Publication 1
2003
285 x 185 cm
Thread stitched on canvas
Photo: James Newell

Figure 18
Alice Kettle
Looking Forwards to the Past – Publication 2
2007
16500 x 330 cm
Thread stitched on canvas
Photo: Joe Low
Winchester Discovery Centre

Figure 19
Alice Kettle
Looking Forwards to the Past – Publication 2
2007
16500 x 330 cm
Thread stitched on canvas
Photo: Joe Low
Winchester Discovery Centre

Figure 20
Alice Kettle
Looking Forwards to the Past (detail) – Publication 2
2007
16500 x 330 cm
Thread stitched on canvas
Photo: Joe Low
Winchester Discovery Centre

Figure 21
Alice Kettle
Looking Forwards to the Past – Publication 2
2007
16500 x 320 cm
Thread stitched on canvas
Photo: Daniel Keeler
Winchester Discovery Centre

Figure 22
Alice Kettle
Heads – Publication 3
Cor
2010
65 x 82 cm
Thread stitched on fabric
Photo: Joe Low

Figure 23
Alice Kettle
Heads – Publication 3
Sol
2008
65 x 82 cm
Thread stitched on fabric
Photo: Joe Low

Figure 24
Alice Kettle
Heads – Publication 3
Rupt
2008
59 x 75 cm
Thread stitched on fabric
Photo: Joe Low

Figure 25
Alice Kettle
Metamorphosis
2003
59 x 59 cm
Thread stitched on fabric
Photo: Joe Low

Figure 26
Elisabeth Frink (1930–1993)
Tribute Head I, II, III, IV
1975
Height: 72 cm
Bronze
Collection: Terry Dintenfass Gallery, New York

Figure 27
Louise Bourgeois (1911–2010)
Untitled
2002
Fabric and aluminium 30.5
x 30.5 x 30.5 cm
Photo: Christopher Burke

Figure 28
Jean Fautrier (1898–1964)
Head of a Hostage, no. 20
1944
Impasto
Size unknown

Figure 29
Alice Kettle
Pause – Publication 4 2009
280 x 185 cm
Thread and fabric stitched on canvas
Photo: Joe Low

Figure 30
Alice Kettle
Pause II – Publication 4
2009
385 x 185 cm
Thread and fabric stitched on canvas
Photo: Joe Low

Figure 31
Nicholas Poussin (1594–1665)
Dance to the Music of Time
c. 1634–1636
104 x 82.5 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection: The Wallace Collection, London.

Figure 32
Paul Klee (1879–1940)
Angelus Novus
1920
Mono print or oil transfer
Collection: Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

Figure 33
Alice Kettle
Pause II – Publication 4
2009
385 x 185 cm
Thread and fabric stitched on canvas
Photo: Joe Low

Figure 34
Alice Kettle
Alice Kyteler – Publication 5
2010
172 x 182 cm
Thread, found objects, wood on canvas
Photo: Rebecca Peters

Figure 35
Alice Kettle
Alice Kyteler (detail) – Publication 5 2010
172 x 182 cm
Thread, found objects, wood on canvas
Photo: Rebecca Peters

Figure 36
Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger (1561–1636)
Queen Elizabeth I ('The Ditchley Portrait')
1592
241 x 152 cm
Oil on canvas
Bequeathed by Harold Lee-Dillon, 17th Viscount Dillon, 1932
NPG 2561
Collection: The National Portrait Gallery, London.

Figure 37
The Queens' House, Greenwich
Inigo Jones (1573–1672)
1639

Figure 38
Alice Kettle
The Garden of England – Publication 6
Flower Helix
2012
150 cm circumference x 1200 cm Theads,
wire, beads.
The Queen's House
The National Maritime Museum Greenwich,
London
Photo: The National Maritime Museum.

Figure 39
Alice Kettle
The Garden of England – Publication 6
Flower Bed (detail)
2012
160 x 230 cm
Thread and print on canvas, rope, paper, lace.
The Queen's House
The National Maritime Museum Greenwich,
London
Photo: The National Maritime Museum.

Figure 40
Alice Kettle
The Garden of England – Publication 6
Flower Bed and *Portrait of Henrietta Maria*
2012
160 x 230 cm
Thread and print on canvas, rope, paper, lace.
The Queen's House
The National Maritime Museum Greenwich,
London
Photo: The National Maritime Museum

Figure 41
Alice Kettle
The Garden of England – Publication 6
Portrait of Henrietta Maria
2012
120 x 160cm,
Thread and print on canvas.
The Queen's House
The National Maritime Museum Greenwich, London
Photo: The National Maritime Museum

Figure 42
Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)
Guernica
1937
780 x 350 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.

Figure 43
Alice Kettle
Loss – Publication 7
Homage to Guernica 2011
600 x 155 cm Thread
on canvas Photo :
Mary Stark

Figure 44
Alice Kettle
Loss (detail) – Publication 7
Homage to Guernica 2011
600 x 155 cm Thread
on canvas Photo :
Mary Stark

Figure 45
Piero della Francesca (1415–1492)
The Nativity
1470
124.4 x 122.6 cm
Oil on poplar NG908
The National Gallery,
London.

Figure 46
Alice Kettle
Loss – Publication 7
Paradise Lost 2011
260 x 230 cm
Thread on blanket.
Photo: Joe Low

Figure 47
Alice Kettle
Loss – Publication 7
Paradise Lost (detail) 2011
260 x 230 cm Thread
on blanket. Photo:
Joe Low

Figure 48
Alice Kettle
Golden Dawn – Publication 8
2014
350 x 162 cm
Thread and print on canvas
Photo: Alice Kettle
Collection of Shipley Museum and Art Gallery.

Figure 49
Alice Kettle
Golden Dawn (detail) – Publication 8
2014
350 x 162 cm
Thread and print on canvas
Photo: Alice Kettle
Collection of Shipley Museum and Art Gallery.

Figure 50
Alice Kettle
The Dog Loukanikos and the Cat's Cradle
2015
520 x 217 cm
Thread and print on canvas
Photo: VAS

Figure 51
Alice Kettle
The Dog Loukanikos and the Cat's Cradle (detail)
2015
520 x 217 cm
Thread and print on canvas
Photo: VAS

Figures 52, 53, 54
Alice Kettle
2007
Studio shots
Photo: Joe Low

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9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

9.11 Publication 1

***Odyssey* (2003) and *Odyssey---Hermes and the Lotos---Eaters* (2003)**

Odyssey 385 x 185 cm, thread stitched on canvas.

Odyssey---Hermes and the Lotos---Eaters, 285 x 185 cm, thread stitched on canvas.

Two artworks exhibited in solo touring exhibition *Mythscapes* (2003–2005), documented in the *Mythscapes* (2003) monograph.

Mythscapes was a one---person touring show hosted by the Bankfield Museum, Halifax in 2003–2005. It toured ten venues in the UK over two years. Documented by a monograph including commissioned essays by Mary Schoeser, Audrey Walker OBE and Sara Roberts. The exhibited work was reproduced in *Machine Stitch Perspectives* (2010) edited by Alice Kettle & Jane McKeating. London: A & C Black. Exhibition reviews include: 'Journey Through Mythscapes – the Work of Alice Kettle' *Embroidery* Magazine, March 2004; 'Alice Kettle – Mythscapes' *Selvedge*, April 2004; 'Alice Kettle – Mythscapes' *Crafts*, no. 188, May 2004; 'Alice Kettle's Mythscapes', *Fibre Arts* Jan/Feb 2005; 'Greek myths – ReInterpretations' by Carol Shinn and Alice Kettle, *Surface Design Journal*, Fall 2005.

9.12 Publication 2

***Looking Forwards to the Past* (2007)**

16500 x 330 cm, thread stitched on canvas

A commissioned artwork, documented in the monograph, *Looking Forwards to the Past* (2007).

This was a major commission for the Winchester Discovery Centre from Hampshire Arts Office. It is documented in a monograph *Looking Forwards to the Past* (2007) published by Ruthin Craft Centre, Wales, with three commissioned essays from Dr Jessica Hemmings, Dr Jane Webb and Dr Melanie Miller. Looking *Forwards to the Past*, a DVD (2007), was also produced by MMU's Visual Resources Centre by Alex McErlain and John Davis. The artwork was reproduced in M. Schoeser (ed.) (2012) *Textiles: The Art of Mankind.* London: Thames and Hudson; and in A. Kettle & J. McKeating (2010) *Machine Stitch Perspective*. London: A & C Black.

The exhibition was reviewed in the *Mid Hampshire Observer*, *Hampshire Chronicle*, *Hampshire Life*, *Perspectives* (Winchester City Council), *Flog It!* (BBC), *Country Lives* (Denham Productions), *Embroidery*, www.themaking.org.uk/makers/2007/03/alice_kettle, www.workshopontheweb.com (2007).

Looking Forwards to the Past received the RIBA Award 2008, Public Library Associations Award 2009, Public Art Award City of Winchester Trust 2010.

9.13 Publication 3

Head Series* (2008–2010) Three artworks titled *Rupt, Sol and Cor.

Sol 2008, 65 x 82 cm, thread stitched on fabric.

Cor 2010, 65 x 82 cm, thread stitched on fabric.

Rupt 2008, 59 x 75 cm, thread stitched on fabric.

These works were exhibited in the 7th International Triennial of Contemporary Textile Arts of Tournai: *The Five Continents: Woven World* (2011) and documented by an accompanying catalogue.

Some Heads were also exhibited in *Allegory* (2009) Crafts Study Centre, UCA, Farnham; and in *Fabric of Myth* (21 June–7 September 2008) at Compton Verney Art Gallery, Warwickshire. An accompanying catalogue of the same title (ISBN 978---0---9552719---4---6) contains essays by the curators Antonia Harrison and James Young, and others.

9.14 Publication 4

***Pause and Pause II* (2009)**

Pause, 280 x 185 cm, thread and fabric stitched on canvas.

Pause II, 385 x 185 cm, thread and fabric stitched on canvas.

Key works in the one-person touring exhibition *Allegory* (2009–2010) hosted by Crafts Study Centre, UCA Farnham and documented in the accompanying catalogue (ISBN 0 9554374 6 6): *Alice Kettle: Allegory* (2009) by Olding, S. Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University.

Allegory toured four venues, and at the Willis Museum, Basingstoke, it was the inaugural contemporary exhibition. *Pause* has been reproduced in: M. Schoeser (ed.) (2012) *Textiles: The Art of Mankind.* London: Thames and Hudson; and A. Kettle & J. McKeating (2010) *Machine Stitch Perspectives.* London: A & C Black. *Pause* was selected by the World Crafts Council for the European Applied Arts Prize (2009) which has accompanying catalogue. It was also exhibited in *A Pause in the Rhythm of Time* (2009) at the Belger Arts Centre, Kansas City, as part of the 'Off the Grid' Surface Design Conference 2009. Reviews of *Allegory* were published in *Selvedge Embroidery*, and 'Scratching the Surface' in *Crafts* Magazine. Also, 'Dancing to the Music of Time', *Crafts* March/April 2010, p. 54; and *Figaro* newspaper and magazine, 9th February 2014.

9.15 Publication 5

***Alice Kyteler* (2010)**

172 x 182 cm thread, found objects, wood on canvas.

Key artwork for two---person touring exhibition, *The Narrative Line: Alice Kettle& Bernie Leahy*, opening at the National Craft Gallery, Kilkenny, 30 October 2010–12 January 2011; documented in the accompanying monograph, *The Narrative Line* (2010) published by the Crafts Council of Ireland.

The Narrative Line (2010–2011) was a two---person touring show hosted by the Crafts Council of Ireland where my work was shown alongside that of Bernie Leahy. It toured three venues in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. The accompanying publication features an essay by Simon Olding and a piece of reflective writing by myself. The exhibition was reviewed in *Irish Arts Review*, October 2010 and *Embroidery* Jan/Feb 2011. *Alice Kyteler* was selected for the Kaunas Biennale *Rewind---Play---Forward* in Lithuania, 2011.

9.16 Publication 6

The Garden of England **(2012)**

Flower Helix (2012), Approx. 150 cm circumference x 1200 cm, threads, wire, beads.

Flower Bed (2012), 160 x 230 cm, thread and print on canvas, rope, paper, lace.

Henrietta Maria (2012), 120 x 160cm, thread and print on canvas.

Aone---personinstallationatTheQueensHouse,TheNationalMaritimeMuseum, London, that included three artworks *Flower Helix* (2012), *Flower Bed* (2012) and *Henrietta Maria* (2012). It was documented in an accompanying leaflet published by the museum.

Research for this project is presented in a chapter 'Stitch in Time' by A. Kettle and J. Webb, published in C. Barber & P. Macbeth (eds) (2014) *Outside: Activating Cloth to Enhance the Way We Live*. Cambridge, Cambridge Scholars Publishing (ISBN---13: 978---------1443856959). The exhibition was reviewed in *Crafts* July/August 2013, *Embroidery*, May/June 2013, and online: http://onestoparts.com/review---the---garden---of---england---queens---------house---greenwich,

And Youth Advisory group; http://nmmyouthadvisorygroup.blogspot.co.uk/

9.17 Publication 7

***Loss* (2011)**

***Paradise Lost* (2010) and *Homage to Guernica* (2011)**

Paradise Lost (2010), 260 x 230 cm, thread on blanket.

Homage to Guernica (2011), 155 x 600 cm thread on canvas

Two key artworks from the two---person exhibition *Loss* (2011–2012), Chichester Cathedral and documented in an accompanying publication of the same title (2011) by J. Findley and A. Kettle, with an essay by Jeremy Theophilus (ISBN 978 1905476 67 1).

Loss was a two---person exhibition along with Jules Findley. *Paradise Lost* was selected for the European Applied Arts Prize 2012 and was part of the *Lost Certainty* exhibition (2011) at Contemporary Applied Arts, London, with Claire Curneen. *Homage to Guernica* was exhibited in *62@50* in the Holden Gallery, MMU (2012); and *Fourteen: The Artists' Response*, Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre, Cwbran, Wales (26 July–20 September 2014).

9.18 Publication 8

Golden Dawn (2014)

360 x 160 cm, thread and print on canvas.

Exhibited in *Collect* at the Saatchi Gallery, London, and in *Craft Now* (2014), Shipley Art Gallery, Gateshead where it was acquired for the permanent collection.

Craft Now (31 May 2014–7 February 2015) is a group exhibition of craft works acquired for the Shipley Art Gallery collection and purchased by the Northern Rock Foundation.

9.2 Appendix 2

Links with *Pause* and *Pause II* --------- Publication 4

9.21 The Angel of History: Walter Benjamin

A Klee drawing named "Angelus Novus" shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe that keeps piling ruin upon ruin and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.

Walter Benjamin, *Ninth Thesis on the Philosophy of History* (2003[1940]392)

9.22 Text for 'Allegory' exhibition with *Pause* and *Pause II* (2009).

Allegory: A metaphor.

A Dance to the Music of Time. I have used the painting as a starting point for a tableau to describe the momentum of life. Within it are elements that I have held onto as a list to structure and shape my thoughts on life. In allegory, there are underlying messages and subtext. For me there are also ecstatic heights, echoes of the past, dark hollows, and emerging light. I wanted to cut them up and use stitch to reconnect the disparate parts, much as our lives reconfigure to be shaped by circumstance.

Seasons: Four characters, joined. Similar to Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, we are defined by our changing faces and yet remain ourselves.

Cycle: The sense of the continuum of life, which repeats and echoes from one generation into the next. There are so many connecting orbits within our lives that are cyclical or overlapping patterns.

Time: The uninterrupted beat. Much like the rhythmic motion of the sewing machine, time has its repetitive pulse, relentlessly moving you forward. I wanted to make pauses in time, to stop the dance and to capture the moment.

Material: Paper, clay, thread. I searched to connect the material forms, so that the conversations between materials become like those of time and people, whereby you visit one and are led and connected to another. Stephen Dixon's ceramics and our collaborative drawing together of ideas made a vastly wider tableau and narrative.

Thread: For me this is the start, the material and the metaphor of an ongoing life which implies an unbroken journey.

Drawing: The start of everything, where the line becomes the conversation. This shared exploration with Stephen Dixon has become an ongoing creative exchange.

9.3 Appendix 3

Links with *Alice Kyteler* – Publication 5

9.31 'Witch Burning' ------ Poem by Sylvia Plath

In the marketplace they are piling the dry sticks.
A thicket of shadows is a poor coat. I inhabit
The wax image of myself, a doll's body.
Sickness begins here: I am the dartboard for witches.
Only the devil can eat the devil out.
In the month of red leaves I climb to a bed of fire.

It is easy to blame the dark: the mouth of a door,
The cellar's belly. They've blown my sparkler out.
A black---------sharded lady keeps me in parrot cage.
What large eyes the dead have!
I am intimate with a hairy spirit.
Smoke wheels from the beak of this empty jar.

If I am a little one, I can do no harm.
If I don't move about, I'll knock nothing over. So I said,
Sitting under a potlid, tiny and inert as a rice grain.
They are turning the burners up, ring after ring.
We are full of starch, my small white fellows. We grow.
It hurts at first. The red tongues will teach the truth.

Mother of beetles, only unclench your hand:
I'll fly through the candle's mouth like a singeless moth.
Give me back my shape. I am ready to construe the days
I coupled with dust in the shadow of a stone.
My ankles brighten. Brightness ascends my thighs.
I am lost, I am lost, in the robes of all this light.

Plath, S. (2002) 'Witch Burning from Poem for a Birthday.' *In* Hughes, T. (ed.) *Sylvia Plath Collected Poems*. New York: Faber and Faber, p. 13

9.4 Appendix 4

9.41 Studio Images

Figures 52, 53, 54
Alice Kettle
2007
Studio shots
Photo: Joe Low